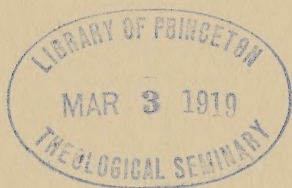


JESUS on His
Second Coming

REV. W. ROY GOFF, S. T. B.



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JESUS on His Second Coming

OR

A Consistent Biblical View of the Lord's
Return, The Resurrection of the
Dead and the Judgment

✓
BY REV. W. ROY GOFF, S. T. B.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

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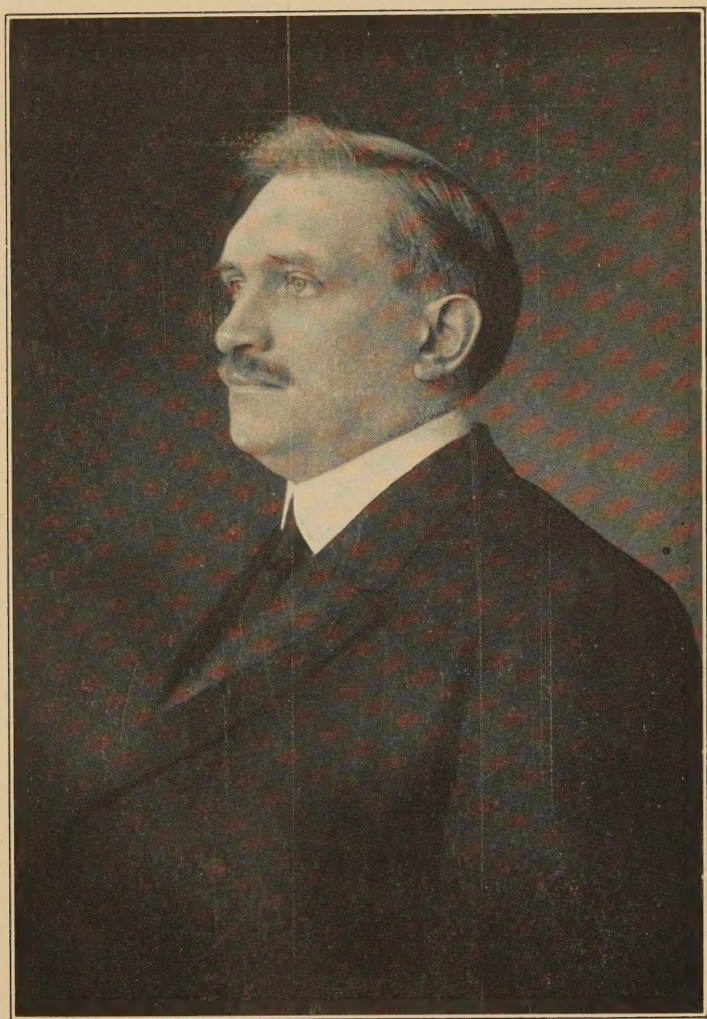


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Blairsville, Pennsylvania

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By W. Roy Goff



W Roy Goff.

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INTRODUCTION

THERE is a vast literature dealing with the subject of "the Lord's coming again." Most of it is painstaking and reverent, some of it is ingenious and fanciful, and not a little of it is controversial and pugnacious.

The present work has several things in its favor. First of all, it is brief; it deals with the main considerations succinctly and cogently and it avoids the alluring subsidiary topics which increase bulk without augmenting force. Secondly, it is sparing of speculation, restricting itself in the most commendable manner to the law and to the testimony. This makes for conciliation as well as for brevity. Thirdly, it interprets Scripture with due consideration for the context and the purpose of the Biblical writers; and it seeks to emphasize the manifest spirit of the writings whose object is religious rather than polemic. Fourthly, it binds up the coming of Jesus with the concrete and immediate issues of human conduct in the light of death, resurrection and judgment; and fifthly, it is written in a style which may be understood by any thoughtful lay reader, the writer's object being to reach "the man on the street" for whom "the coming of Jesus" has implications of a serious and far-reaching nature.

In religion, as in other matters, men and women are apt to ask, "What of it? Where is the promise of good in an issue of such debatable value as that of the Second Coming? That is something for the theologians to differ and to quarrel about." On the other hand, the theologians differ and quarrel about it just because the teaching has immense practical significance. How far doctrine in general, and this doctrine in particular, has been able to effect men's lives, let the famous misreading of Christ's teaching—the Millerite movement of

1843—bear witness. Always belief influences conduct, and as a man believeth in his heart so is he.

Moreover, the teaching of Jesus, whatever the subject, has imperative claims upon those who recognize His leadership and who profess discipleship. He is to guide us into all truth and there is no truth his people can afford to disregard. Has He a message about His own second coming, and, if so, what is it? This book is an attempt at answering the question fairly. Not all readers will agree with the answer. That is a small matter in itself. In a question which has given rise to so much discussion and which has been argued to such diverse conclusions on the part of equally able and devout minds, one does not expect the last word even in a treatise so candid and persuasive as this. The author will have served high purpose in his writing if he has quickened interest in the person and teaching of Jesus and has led his readers, not simply to know Jesus better, but to love Him more ardently.

In estimating the worth of an argument in theological debate, one cannot overlook the evangelistic value. It is claimed that the most successful evangelists of the last hundred years were uniformly pre-millenarian. To them the conviction that Jesus was to come shortly in power and in glory, with signs of His coming made manifest to the eyes of men through marvels displayed in the heavens above, the earth beneath, and the waters under the earth,—this was to them an incentive to urgency in getting as many as possible into the zone of safety as quickly as possible. But does not the position of this book minister quite as much to the sense of urgency? There is something in a spectacular advent, whether near or remote, which removes Jesus from the common life of the people. One cannot help recalling that a spectacular coming was part of the popular theology of Christ's own day. Messiah was always thought of in connection with martial display, royal robes, a sceptre and a throne. No wonder the people did not recognize him when he came; no wonder they questioned contemptuously: "Can any good come out of Nazareth?" And no wonder that Jesus was heartbroken over the Holy City which knew not the day of its visitation.

The disciples at Thessalonica had convictions also about

a spectacular coming. To them it appears to have been a temptation to live "disorderly lives" and to become "mere idle busybodies." They allowed themselves to become absorbed in speculations about the time and manner of Christ's appearing and neglected their daily business. Paul, who probably shared the popular expectation, was, however, more deeply impressed with the Christ who had already come in his heart and life and found in this conviction of Christ's actual presence with him the sense of urgency which kept him earnestly and assiduously at work from day to day. To some hearts it might mean something that Jesus was to come in the clouds with all His holy angels with Him and that they should see Him. But surely it must mean more to these same hearts that Jesus is already here, standing beside them in the work of life, keeping them in dark hours of weariness and temptation, comforting them in sorrow, cheering their solitude, imparting to them assurance of sins forgiven, bestowing upon them strength for warfare and peace of mind, and graciously enabling them to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord.

This is the genius of the author's discussion: Jesus is here. He "comes" in all the crises of life. His voice is to be heard in every good book, in every helpful conversation, in every uplifting address, in every conscious desire for a better life, in every aspiration towards truth, purity and brotherly kindness. The man who cannot recognize the coming of Jesus in these things would not be persuaded if Jesus should come down from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God. If we know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh, at least we know that we may share His life *now* and know Him not as "coming" but as "having come," and as having come to go no more out of our lives forever.

CHARLES M. STUART.

Evanston, Illinois.

PREFACE TO THE NEW EDITION

AFTER the first edition of this book was off the press, fifty copies were sent to as many theologians and leaders of the world's religious thought asking their most critical judgment, as to any inconsistency discoverable, and as to any interpretations not being possible ones in the light of other Scripture statements. Of the answers received many were highly commendatory, and not one gave any tangible proof or reason to make the author think that, in the interest of honesty, logic or truth, he must take back anything hereinbefore written. Rather, he feels that his former conclusions should be fortified, which is readily possible by accumulation of evidence.

Three of those answers received (all from theological professors of high standing) contained the thought that surely God would not have left the Church in the dark regarding this subject for 2000 years. However, singular as it may be, one came from a pre-millennialist, and one from a post-millennialist, and one after using the arguments of post-millennarians ended by saying, "I reject post-millennialism absolutely". One of the three admitted that his statement was no argument, which, of course, is true. So, it would seem evident that the light does not shine perfectly yet, or there would not be so many opinions in spite of their thoughts to the contrary. This book is the attempt of the author to get at the Bible facts so as to throw some new light on the subject. He hopes for God's blessing on the truth.

The writer's early religious education led him to become an ardent pre-millennialist. He went to college to study for the ministry. By home associates, however, he was advised, "Going to college is wasting precious time. You ought to preach at once and get at least a few souls saved before the Lord comes". (According to W. B. Godbey's calculations, the

next year, 1898 A. D., was one of the probable years when Jesus would arrive.) But remembering that Jesus was thirty years old before He began to preach, we decided to stay in college. At the end of that year, we decided to marry. Again advice was given: "Don't marry lest you should find yourself with a family to undergo the woes of the tribulation period, for Matt. 24: 19 says: 'Woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days, for then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world, no, nor ever shall be'." But we read in the same chapter that there would be "marrying and giving in marriage until the Son of Man came," so again we disappointed our would-be benefactors and advisors. Pardon this personal allusion. It seems ridiculous to us now, but in those days we had misgivings, thinking that we may be committing unpardonable sins. The pressure was brought to bear so hard during the years of study and preparation that at times we were about to surrender. We might have done so, had it not been for the devout, resolute, unyielding nature of the helpmeet God gave, who met our reasonings and Scripture quotations with better ones. We began to be in earnest to know why we had been taught such unscriptural ideas.

In the course of time, the discovery of certain defects and conflicts in biblical evidence for pre-millennial belief—and we feel sure that no logical, truth-loving pre-millennialist has failed to come upon some of those difficulties—led to further original study. Being desirous to arrive at the Bible truth and nothing but the truth, this book shows the result, in brief form, necessarily arrived at after seventeen years of contemplation and biblical research.

So, in the providence of God, we were permitted to get a good college and seminary education, specializing somewhat in the Greek New Testament; then to travel and study among oriental peoples, in Egypt, in and around Jerusalem, in Asia Minor, Turkey and Greece, also visiting Rome and Germany and six other European countries. In all of which, the author was compelled to give up his old belief in Christ's return in the flesh; and together with this, by comparison of history

and Bible statements with the present, was shown conclusively that the world is not growing worse.

We believe in the divine inspiration of the Scriptures, and in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, "for neither is there any other name wherein we must be saved." We have experienced the new birth, as taught in the Confession of Faith and Articles of Religion of the Protestant Church, and having dedicated our redeemed powers to God by His help, we believe that He sanctifies the whole.

As to the world, we look for the golden age in the future. In that future the people will then have realized the fulfillment of: "The kingdom (not kingdoms) of the world (Greek, *cosmos*, not *oikoumenee*) has become the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever" (Rev. 11: 15); and that that kingdom came gradually, as the grain of mustard seed grew, till it took in all who lived; and was not ushered in complete by a great cataclysm or miraculous phenomena in the heavens, as some who literalize figurative speech make themselves believe. Therefore, in making a study of the subject of this book, we would ask our readers to consider the following carefully:

1. That the Old Testament does not contain any statement whatever that gives any hint that there was to be any "Second" Coming of Jesus in the flesh. Everything written appears to be in regard to His first coming. The first knowledge we have of any second coming was from the words of Jesus himself. It is very necessary, therefore, that we consider as fundamental, and treasure up as precious, every word of Jesus on this subject, if we are to arrive at the true New Testament doctrine.

2. That there is no consistent reason why certain Old Testament passages which are recognized as figurative, and referring to the results of the first and only coming of Jesus in the flesh should be regarded *as literal* in the New Testament, referring them to His Second Coming. While, doubtless, they refer in some regards to conditions after His Second Coming, yet there is no reason nor need for saying that they must be literally fulfilled. For example, The frequent allusions to the "Coming of the Lord" in judgment in

the Old Testament, even when he "rode on a cloud" and "was seen" flying on the wings of the wind, are *not* considered as bodily and *visible* comings of the Lord. Why then should the "coming of the Lord" in judgment spoken of in the New Testament, even though "he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him" be considered a *visible* coming, wholly different from the Coming of the Lord in the Old Testament. Why should the very same expressions be considered as figurative and not visible in the Old Testament, and literal, bodily, miraculous and visible when quoted in the New Testament? The Jews of the apostolic days who were familiar with that figurative language of the Old Testament would not fall into the absurdity of interpreting it literally when they saw it quoted in the Gospels and Epistles of which they were the first custodians. Why should we today do so?

Because certain prophecies referring to His Coming in the flesh and facts in that earthly life were actually and literally fulfilled is no proof that everything prophesied in regard to the future kingdom of God was to be literally fulfilled. In fact, some prophecies we know were fulfilled without physical changes as might have been expected by literalists, such as the prophecy of the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

The consideration of the two above propositions will show to open-minded millenarians the weakness of their theories. Both pre-millennialists and post-millennialists depend for their very existence on this grossly literal, materialistic and inconsistent interpretation; and to reject interpretation of these picturesque orientalisms as literal statements of facts, is to sound the death blow both to pre- and post-millennialism. We feel that this should be rejected, however, and until then millenarians will do violence to consistent exegesis. Note some of these Old Testament expressions sometimes quoted word for word in the New Testament.

1. "The stars of heaven shall not give their light, the sun shall be darkened, the moon shall not cause her light to shine, and I will shake the heavens" (Isa. 13:10, 13). "The sun shall be darkened, the moon shall not give her light, the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven shall be shaken" (Matt. 24:29). Millenarians admit that the first

is figurative, but demand that when quoted it certainly is literal. Why? Simply to maintain a theory now shown to be wrong.

2. "The host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll" (Isa. 34:4). "The stars of heaven fell to earth, and the heaven was removed as a scroll when it is rolled up" (Rev. 6:13). Why should the first be considered as figurative, and when quoted be considered as referring to a literal, miraculous occurrence?

3. "The mountains quake before Him and the hills melt, and the earth is burned" (Nahum 1:5). "The day of the Lord shall come, the heavens shall pass away with a great noise and the elements shall melt, and the earth shall be burned up" (2 Pet. 3:10). No one thinks of interpreting the first literally, but many like to read it as taking place literally when quoted in the New Testament. There is absolutely no more reason for such interpretation, thereby teaching people that the world will be burned up, than for demanding that the Old Testament statement took place literally. Both were written figuratively and were intended to be so read by all.

4. "Behold the Lord rideth upon a swift cloud and shall come" (Isa. 19:1). "Behold he cometh with clouds and every eye shall see him" (Rev. 1:7). While the Old Testament statement is figurative, how does consistency demand that it must be literal and visible to fleshly eyes in the New Testament?

5. "This is that," (Acts 2:16). These words of Peter declare the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy. And it is one instance in which figurative language of the Old Testament was not fulfilled literally as to a physical and spectacular change in the heavens. Why other similar prophecies should be denied the right of fulfillment, *except literally*, as demanded by some, is hard to fathom. See a fuller discussion of this Scripture, pages 33, 34.

Since writing this book our attention has been called to Dr. Josiah Strong's "New World-Religion". Chapter IX of his book traverses the same argument and arrives at the same conclusion as presented in this book. In fact, in regard to the time and invisibility of the Second Coming it so identically coincides with this book that we feel impelled to call attention

'o it and suggest that it be read first hand rather than give an extended quotation here. We quote these significant words, however: *

"Events that took place during the lifetime of that generation must be regarded as the coming of the Son of man in His kingdom, or the prophecy of Jesus had no fulfillment, and he was mistaken. * * * * * Evidently we must discredit the evangelists as reliable reporters, or we must discredit Jesus as a prophet, or we must discredit the literalism of the millenarians. Which shall it be? * * * * * To the Jew, the fall of Jerusalem was the overwhelming day of Judgment; to the Christian, whose anointed eyes could see its spiritual meaning, it was the coming of the Son of man in power and great glory. * * * * * The coming of the Son of man is the coming of His kingdom. * * * * * There is no moral power which Jesus could exert in the flesh which he cannot *now* exert in the spirit." Pre-millenarians seem to think it necessary for Jesus to come in the flesh in order to exert His power.

Yes, it is true that much of the New Testament has no meaning to twentieth century readers as *unfulfilled* prophecy, but prophecy fulfilled, whether in the New or Old Testament is by no means valueless.

When St. Paul mentioned "looking for that blessed hope" (Titus 2:13), there is the best of evidence that he meant it for Titus and the people of his own day which was certainly fulfilled to the letter for them (Read pages 78 to 80). If it was fulfilled for them it cannot mean for us 2,000 years later. *Our* blessed hope now is in living and reigning with Jesus, looking for one of the many mansions being prepared for us, "a house *not made with hands*", eternal in the heavens, when our time comes to pass into that other world (invisible to us now). *Our* blessed hope also answers for us the "fashioning anew the body of our humiliation to conform to the body of His glory" (Phil. 3:21), while for Paul and the apostolic Christians this also was certainly fulfilled as it was written in connection with the "Coming again" of the Savior from

* New World-Religion, pages 294-300.

heaven (verse 20). As to when that was, can be seen by the Scripture argument as discussed in the body of this book.

We wish to append a quotation from one of the readers of the first edition, which is especially gratifying. We hope that this book may, through the grace of God, produce many similar experiences in others:

"I used to think of God and Jesus as far away. When temptations came and I prayed, my thought always went away off to Him in heaven, but now He seems right here working with me, which makes Christian living so much easier.

"I had always felt that the Holy Spirit was in my life, but when I realized that Jesus was also here in His second advent, I came to a consciousness of His abiding presence such as was not possible as long as I still thought of Jesus on a throne in the heavens waiting to come back sometime. There was something in it that removed Jesus from my inner consciousness. Since I have come to believe in His personal presence here and now, it is so much sweeter and better and more helpful in the countless perplexities of my life. I am so thankful that I was brought to think of the Coming of Jesus in this new light as made clear in your book."

Read the argument of the book, together with the Bible, and be convinced of the truth of the matter.

W. R. G.

PREFACE

BEING interested in the subjects herein considered and taking occasion to study them carefully, the writer noted the fact that authorities disagree widely. No decisive, conclusive doctrine seems to be arrived at which takes account of *all* the vital Scriptures on the subject, so that one can feel sure of his ground. Therefore, in presenting these subjects, it is our desire to take up some Scripture passages that have been neglected, and to consider others, which, in consequence of this neglect, have been misinterpreted, in order to show that the writers of the New Testament were of one mind on these subjects, and that the chaos of later years has been caused by too free methods of interpretation. Our aim has been to make a reverent study of the Scripture in a search after truth and to find out the meaning of the Word, and to rest only with a "Thus saith the Lord." Our determination has been to know the truth as revealed in the Word, and to be governed wholly by a loyal submission to its authority.

As there is absolutely nothing written to *prove* that the Book of Revelation and John's Gospel and Epistles were written after A. D. 70, we believe of course, that they were written prior to that date, as the time of the Coming or Revelation of Jesus mentioned therein should agree with the teachings of other New Testament writers who place that Coming at the end of the age (about A. D. 70). And if the Book of Revelation is prophetic, in the sense of "foretelling", it must necessarily have been written before that event,—some authorities place the date as early as 54 A. D.

In addition to this, the internal evidence to uphold the earlier date is overwhelming, which cannot be deduced here in the space at our command. On the other hand, no critic of any note has ever claimed that the later date is required

by any internal evidence. And one statement alone appears to be the sole external reason why the later date is held by some, and that statement is capable of two meanings. It is the one by Irenaeus, written about 200 A. D.* concerning the name of the anti-Christ, which says, "If it were necessary it would doubtless have been announced by him who saw the Apocalypse; for it was not a great while ago that (it or he) was seen, toward the end of Domitian's reign." The subject of the Greek verb "was seen" is ambiguous and may be either "it" or "he". If "he", referring to John, who saw the vision, is the subject, it does not discredit the earlier date. If "it", referring to the vision, is the subject, there is the one lone testimony to a later date.

It is true, we find the later date upheld by Eusebius, the Ecclesiastical Historian, who wrote about 100 years after Irenaeus, but he expressly quotes this statement of Irenaeus as his authority. Other writers have given no other source for their belief in a later date. So no great stress can be safely laid on the external evidence, especially since an ancient Latin document, probably as old as the writing of Irenaeus, mentions Paul as following the order of his predecessor John in writing to seven churches.** This is evidence of a current notion that John's Revelation was written before the decease of Paul, which took place not later than A. D. 70.

We reject the theory of a double sense in prophetic Scriptures, that of a near and a remote fulfillment, because it is unscriptural. To assume such unnatural method, in the absence of a hint or Scripture statement for it and in the face of explicit statements to the contrary, is ungrammatical and unreasonable, and in the words of a recent writer, "is immoral". Such theory unsettles all sound and scientific interpretation. This we affirm assuredly of the 24th chapter of Matthew and the Book of Revelation. On this thought, Melancthon says, "One definite and simple meaning of Scripture is in every case to be sought." Canon Ryle says,*** "Words of Scripture were intended to have one definite sense

* *Adversus Heereses*, v. 30.

** *Biblical Hermeneutics*, Terry, page 136.

*** *Expository Thoughts on St. Luke*, Vol. 1, page 383.

and our first object should be to discover that sense and adhere rigidly to it—to say that words *do* mean a thing because they *can* be tortured into meaning it is a most dishonorable and dangerous way of handling Scripture.” Luther said, “The Holy Ghost is the simplest writer and speaker in heaven or earth; hence his words cannot have more than one simplest sense. The Scriptures must not have a two-fold meaning, but must retain only the one expressed by the words.”—Dr. M. Reu. Professor Jowett says,* “The office of the interpreter is not to add another interpretation, but to recover the original one, that is, the meaning of the words as they struck the ears or flashed before the eyes of those who first heard and read them.”

We realize that some things herein are contrary to some older theologies. Consequently, one will not find certain commentators in agreement. They who have come before the public in print through books or magazines will doubtless make unfavorable comment in order to try to square themselves with the misinformed public. But we seem to see the possibility of some new light on even such a venerable subject. We have written only because we feel that the older teachings are unscriptural and inconsistent. Therefore, we ask that you make a careful reading of the book to see that we have drawn our chief arguments from the *Word*, for we reject everything that cannot be proved thereby or that may be in conflict therewith.

Perhaps it is needless to say that in quoting Greek verbs, as a general thing, we print only the first or lexicon forms of words not caring to give person, number and tense, inasmuch as many of our readers, not knowing Greek, would not grasp the reason for the various endings. For example, we use the word “optomai” to represent all the forms of a certain Greek verb, mainly translated “see” in the New Testament.

In regard to the Greek word “mello”, let us say that while its use with the infinitive is many times indistinguishable from the simple future, yet when we find all the writers of the New Testament in agreement, that the “coming of Jesus” was to

* Essay on the Interpretation of Scripture, Section 1, 2, 3.

be in their near future, we feel justified in seeing significance in their use of that word with its original meaning, "on the point of" or "about to". We cannot feel that such meaning should be so disregarded as to have no bearing, as to time when, on the questions of the Coming, the Resurrection and the Judgment. Hence, our emphasis on that meaning in the following pages.

We believe, of course, that the Scriptures sustain the view herein discussed. The only way to set aside the conclusions arrived at is to point out the text wrongly interpreted and bring to bear others which disprove the position in the light of those used by the writer.

We have searched the Scriptures carefully and prayerfully, relying upon the Holy Spirit to lead us to the true meaning of His Word. We sincerely pray that through God's blessings this book may prove a help and a comfort to many souls.

The view herein discussed is not a discovery of the author, for it might be said to be but the view of my now sainted theological professor, Rev. M. S. Terry, D. D., LL.D., which was taught by him to his classes in Systematic Theology for thirty years or more, and finally given by him to the world in his "Biblical Dogmatics," published in 1907 A. D., pages 212-251, 442-472. The same view was given to the world by the Rev. J. Stuart Russell, M. A., but much more in detail, in his book, "The Parousia," published in 1887, a volume of 560 pages. Rev. William S. Urmy, D. D., also wrote a very complete volume of 400 pages on this view. All three volumes, together with the Bible, foremost of all with its very plain words on the subject, were constant companions of the author in the preparation of this book, which we hope will be small enough and cheap enough to reach the common people, whom the large theological treatises mentioned could not possibly reach.

W. ROY GOFF,

Blairsville, Pa., Oct. 31, 1917

PART ONE

A Consistent Biblical View of the Lord's Return

CHAPTER I.—THE SUBJECT INTRODUCED

THAT there is not a little misunderstanding of the Biblical teaching concerning the Second Coming of Jesus is evident from the fact that there are so many and such divergent theories afloat in these days regarding that subject.

But as there certainly can be but one true doctrine, there ought to be a way to discover it by carefully comparing Scripture with Scripture.

The post-millennial and pre-millennial interpretations claim the largest following, and seem about equally divided in numbers. These views are widely divergent, however. The first mentioned theorists claim that the millennium will be followed by the Second Coming of Christ, at which time all affairs will be ended. We do not care, here, to argue the idea that there may be a coming at the end of time or even at the death of each individual believer, but certainly as we see it, there are but few passages of Scripture that can refer to any such comings. And such comings would not be the Parousia (presence) to which there are very many references, for the Parousia was to be before time ended while men still needed Christ's presence with them in the world. The pre-millennarians appreciate this feature of Scripture truth, but have failed to emphasize the time of the coming according to Scripture, which fact is brought out more fully in the following pages.

The pre-millennial theorists claim Christ will come

and usher in the millennium and will reign a definite or indefinite period on an earthly, visible, material throne in His kingdom.

On any subject whatever there may be found those who will take a theory suggested by some particular passage of Scripture or by individual thought, and build up and around it Scripture proofs. This is a wrong and unsafe method regarding biblical teaching, as it permits too easily the danger of bending Scripture to suit the theory. Rather, the true method is to use Scripture to formulate doctrine.

In regard to this much discussed subject the best way is to discover what Christ says about the matter first, then search the other biblical writers. One should not, however, interpret the latter so as to make them contradict the true doctrine propounded by the Lord Himself.

The earliest account we have in the gospels from our Lord to the disciples that speaks definitely of the future coming, was on the occasion when Christ sent them out to preach, and told them: "Ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel till the Son of Man be come." (Matt. 10:23). The next definite mention comes in the 16th chapter, verse 28. Here Jesus says, "There are some standing here who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."

Let it be said on these passages: 1. There is no figurative language here to give rise to ambiguity. 2. He had not yet come. 3. The coming of the Son of Man is coincident with the coming of the kingdom and the one does not take place without the other. 4. The coming referred to was to be in the life time of some of the disciples then living. 5. Since "some" only of the disciples would be living, then assuredly some would die before that great event. 6. This is the only doctrine of the Second Coming published up to that time.

This latter verse has its parallel both in Mark and Luke. In Mark 9:1, the reading is similar to the above:

"There are some standing here that shall not taste of death," but ends, "Till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power." Luke 9:27 is similar to the others, and ends, "Till they see the kingdom of God." By this comparison we see that Mark's and Luke's idea "to see the Kingdom of God" is equivalent to Matthew's idea "to see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom".

We take up (1), The word "see." Taking these three parallel passages together, then "to see the kingdom" means "to see the king," and vice versa. And if one cannot see the kingdom of God with fleshly eyes, neither can it be meant that he is to see the King with fleshly eyes. One cannot see a kingdom with fleshly eyes. For example, one might go to England, but he cannot see the kingdom of Great Britain, but he can perceive the effects of that kingdom. No more can one see the Kingdom of God with fleshly eyes. But one can perceive the same and see the influence of that kingdom in human lives. Since this is so apparent and also since the word "see" is translated from the same Greek verb used by Jesus in John 3:3 "Except,....he cannot *see* the kingdom of God," where it unquestionably refers to spiritual perception, therefore, we conclude that the word "see" in these three parallel passages and others on the same subject does not refer to sight of fleshly eyes. And if "perceive" or "discern" had been used by the translators instead of the word "see," which is a permissible translation of the Greek, less misapprehension would have been caused.

We next take up (2), "The coming of the Son of Man in His kingdom," (Matt. 16:28). We find this term used interchangeably with "the coming of the kingdom," (Luke 17:20), and to "See the kingdom come with power," (Mark 9:1), and "See the Son of Man coming with power and great glory," (Matt. 24:30), and like expressions, so we conclude that since all these are terms expressive of the time of Christ's second coming, therefore, Matthew 16:28 refers to the

time of Christ's second coming. It cannot have been fulfilled in the transfiguration scene of Matt. 17:1-8, because it, together with verse 27, preceding, has in it the judgment scene, (and we have no right to separate these two Scripture verses) which is not a part of Matt. 17:1-8; furthermore, not one of the disciples was dead at the time of the transfiguration as verse 28 compels us to believe would be the case, as truly as that some would be living, at the time of the great event predicted. These two statements of fact seem to us to preclude the only argument used by pre-millennialists, as far as we have ever seen, that v. 28 is fulfilled in the transfiguration. This being so, they have no place in their theory for v. 28, whose phraseology, together with that of its parallels, as given above, they use continually when they refer to Christ's second coming. That the transfiguration was a sample or proof of the coming kingdom and its glory no one could doubt, but there is nothing that says that scene was all that was meant by Matt. 16:27-28. In fact, the kingdom had not yet come at the later time when the Lord spoke of his coming (parousia) in that generation (Matt. 24:30,34); nor yet at the last supper, for Jesus plainly infers that the kingdom had not yet come at that time (Luke 22:18).

Neither can verse 28 refer to the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost for the parousia (presence) of the Lord was not yet come at the time of the writing of the second epistle to the Thessalonians as is made clear in II Thes. 2:1-3 (quoted in footnote, page 36). This also shows that the "presence" of which Jesus speaks, Matt. 28:20 (quoted in footnote, page 29) is not the same as His parousia (presence) which had not yet taken place when Paul wrote. Further conclusive argument against this wrong view held by some is given on pages 47-50.

The third definite reference in order of time came about when the Pharisees demanded to know of Jesus "When the Kingdom of God should come," (Luke

17:20), and He answered them and said, "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation," and verse 21, "Neither shall they say, lo here! or there! for lo, the Kingdom of God is within you." This shows (1), there had been talk about the coming of the kingdom. (2), That they thought of the kingdom as material, and earthly, and visible, or else Jesus would not have needed to answer as he did, telling them of their mistaken notions of that kingdom in a general statement that it is not local, but in the hearts of the people. Of course, Jesus did not mean "in the Pharisees," for they had not accepted the Messiah, but His expression was for everybody for all time.

Along this line Jesus further speaks, John 18:36, "My kingdom is not of this world." If His kingdom were of this world, then would his "servants fight"; furthermore, His throne would likely be earthly, visible, material. This Jesus positively denies.

However, while the source, origin and authority of His kingdom is not of this world, yet we must not fail to emphasize the fact that the world is the scene of its operations. The gospel of the kingdom is to affect all society. It has affected all society, and is to do so more and more. And just as it grips a man's soul so will he begin to bring all material things under the reign of righteousness; and the material world and its conditions must rise to higher levels.

But some considerable number teach today that that kingdom is to be set up in Jerusalem as the earthly throne, a visible, material kingdom; that we should be on a constant lookout for our now "absent Lord" to return. This, however, is contrary to Christ's words, "My kingdom is not of this world."

But how has such misapprehension come about? Through two causes mainly.

1. It is born of a natural desire to "see" with fleshly eyes. And is not that the burden with which the church of today must contend in teaching spiritual things? Was not that the burden of Christ on earth,

to teach the disciples themselves that His kingdom was spiritual, not material? He even plainly said to them when talking definitely on the subject of the coming kingdom, "Ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man and ye shall not see it," (Luke 17:22). "See" in this verse assuredly refers to "sight with fleshly eyes," because the general subject of verses 20-22 is the denial of outward show and locality of the kingdom and of the coming king.

2. The second reason for such misapprehension has been the transference of the old Jewish concept of a materialistic kingdom at the first advent of their Messiah to the Second Advent. The Jews were disappointed, because they thought that the prophecies of the Old Testament taught such a materialistic kingdom at the first advent. But those who think and teach that those same Old Testament prophecies refer to a materialistic kingdom to be set up at the second advent are equally wrong and will just as surely be disappointed according to Christ's words just above quoted. Christ's kingdom is not material but spiritual. So materialistic are they now, like the Jews of old who failed to recognize their Messiah when he came, that the modern materialistic thinkers fail to recognize Christ in His Parousia, or Christ's definite teachings as to the invisible nature of His Parousia. They try to read their interpretation of prophecy into the New Testament instead of reading prophecy in the light of the New Testament.

That really serious person who says that nothing has yet transpired which adequately measures up to the prophecies of Christ's second advent should take note that this is precisely the statement that the Jew makes when he is told that the prophecy of Christ's first advent was fulfilled in the life of Jesus. The Jew says, "The life of Jesus does not adequately measure up to our prophecy of that event." But just as surely as the Jew fails to realize the truth in regard to the first advent, so the pre-millennialists and the post-millennial-

ists fail to realize the truth of the second advent; and the Jew does not as we see it go farther from the truth in his contention than these, for they, to maintain their theories must assume many positions not accordant with biblical teaching regarding the Kingdom of God, and its correlate, the coming of the Son of Man.

Further definite reference to His second coming, reported by Matthew, (but in the same discourse according to Luke in which he declared "the Kingdom of God cometh not with observation") was brought about by two (not three) questions of the disciples regarding the destruction of the Jewish temple, as Christ had just said, "there shall not be left one stone upon another."

The first question was, "When shall these things be?" and in the same breath, not waiting for an answer, and as if they clearly understood from past references and utterances that their second question referred to the same time, asked, "And what shall be the sign of thy coming and the end (or consummation) of the age?" Matt. 24:3 (Revised Version).

Does the expression "end of the world" of the King James' Version mean what is commonly thought about that expression? It is used by only two New Testament authors, Matthew and the writer of The Hebrews. The latter writes (Heb. 9:26), "Now once in the end of the age ('world' in the King James' Version) hath He been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." In regard to this passage, we think no one questions that "the sacrifice of Himself" refers to Christ's death on the cross which took place near to the end of that age, instead of the supposed end of the world, as in both instances the original Greek expression has precisely the same meaning. With this proper translation understood much misapprehension will be obviated.

What did the "end of the age" mean to these questioners? Undoubtedly it meant to them the then existing age of the Levitical law, which was to be fulfilled in Him, a period of time just preceding the second com-

ing of Christ of which He had previously told them would take place in the lifetime of some then living. That was their chief concern, while the destruction of Jerusalem was only an incident to happen in those days just preceding the coming (parousia or presence). Looking back in history we think no one doubts but that the dispensation or age or Jewish Church State ended at the destruction of Jerusalem at which time the sacrifices in the temple ceased and have never since been resumed. There is no reason to doubt that the disciples connected the destruction of the temple with the end of the age, as their questions clearly show.

If no bias had crept in to influence interpretation and Scripture had been permitted to explain Scripture, there never would have been any difficulty in seeing that the end of that age was to be before that generation had passed away (Matt. 24:34) "This generation shall not pass away till all these things be fulfilled," and that the Parousia was to have been "in those days" (Mark 13:24); "immediately after the tribulation of those days" (Matt. 24:29), and as verse 34 asserts (before that generation should pass away), which is the direct answer to the two questions the disciples asked, "When shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming and the end of the age?" of verse 3, as to the time.

Matthew very consistently used this same expression "end of the age (Greek, aeon)" in chapter 13:39, 40, 49*, referring to the judgment, which is in perfect agreement with chapter 16:27,28** on the subject, the end of the age (aeon) coming within the lifetime of some of the disciples. (See article on "The Judgment," Part Three of this book.)

* Matt. 13:39, 40, 49, "The harvest is the end of the AGE." "As therefore the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be in the end of the AGE, the angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from among the righteous."

** Matt. 16:27, 28, "The Son of Man shall (Greek, mello, IS ABOUT TO) come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then shall He render unto every man according to his deeds. Verily, I say unto you, there are some of them that stand here, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom."

Similarly, in Matt. 28:20*, the only other place the expression "end of the age (aeon)" occurs in the New Testament, Jesus refers to a special sense in which He would not leave them alone until the end of that age (aeon) when He would return to their midst in His second advent as another Presence (Parousia) to abide and reign forever.

This expression in Matt. 28:20 is perhaps one of the hardest points for the old interpreters to concede. The church has so long read this expression as promising Christ's presence to the supposed end of time that she has lost sight of the meaning it conveyed to the first hearers, the Apostles. They positively understood that the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple marked the end of the age (Matt. 24:3), but they just as certainly understood that Christ was to come back again at the end of that age to abide and reign in the world forever. But were they to be alone in the interim? No, this passage assured them on that point. Not only would these words be comforting from the moment their Lord ascended, but they also had that other promise, the promise of the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete who was to be their guide into all truth. We do *not* understand that this expression in Matt. 28:20 refers either to the gift of the Holy Spirit or to Christ's presence in the world to the end of time; however, it may be so used, and properly, in an accommodated sense. The positive Scripture assurances of Christ's presence *in the world now* are all those passages which refer to His return, which return, however, was to be at the end of that age, immediately following the tribulation days in connection with the destruction of Jerusalem of which Matt. 24:29 is a sample. Christ is now in the world in His invisible, *personal* presence as certainly as that the Holy Spirit is now in the world in His invisible, *personal* presence.

The Scripture, Matt. 24:34, "This generation shall

* Matt. 28:20, "Lo! I am with you all the days, even unto the end of the AGE."

not pass till all these things be fulfilled," answers not only the two questions of the disciples but it also answers other queries brought out by Jesus in this memorable discourse and which are included in the "all things" mentioned.

However, some insist that because the events predicted did not come to pass visibly in that generation, therefore the word "generation" (Greek, *genea*) does not mean what is usually understood, but that it must mean "race or nation," and that Jesus meant to say, "The Jewish race or nation would not pass away until all was fulfilled. But, upon examination, we find the word used forty times in the New Testament and every time the Revised Version translates the word, "generation." Some of these would have no sense if translated "race or nation." For examples, take the following:

1. Matt. 1:17: "So all the generations from Abraham unto David are fourteen generations." Put "race or nation" instead of "generation" and one realizes at once that such is not the meaning, and not a possible translation.

2. Matt. 23:36: "All these things shall come upon this generation." No commentator has ever proposed to understand this as referring to any other than the existing generation. Race or nation is not a translation to be thought of. Why, then, in the same subject should Jesus use the same word in Matt. 24:34, if He meant race or nation?

3. Mark 8:38: "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me in this sinful generation." Even pre-millennialists agree that Jesus meant generation, not race, in this passage.

4. Luke 17:25: "The Son of Man must be rejected of this generation." This is a reference to the particular generation that rejected the Messiah or words have no sure meaning.

Can anyone believe that the assertion of our Lord made with, "Verily, I say unto you," amounts to no more than, "The Hebrew race shall not become extinct

till all these things be fulfilled?" Suppose a prophet in our day, predicting that New York City would be leveled to the ground and a fearful slaughter take place, should be asked, "When?" and he would answer, "The American nation or race shall not become extinct till all these things come to pass." Such would be an affront to the hearers. "Safe prophesying, when it is so far in the future," we would say.

Was it for this extinction of their race that the waiting disciples were to wait and watch? The bare supposition of such a meaning in our Lord's prediction shows itself to be a *reductio ad absurdum*.

But by an easy, natural interpretation we see no need for anyone to aver that verse 34 must have got dislocated in copying manuscripts or that verses 29-31 must be highly oriental language still connected with the destruction of Jerusalem, or that these verses may have fallen out of proper place by carelessness of scribes or even that Jesus just spoke of the destruction of Jerusalem as an earnest of what was to happen before his second coming in some very distant future.

As it is, we see no possible way to set aside these statements as facts except to read into them another meaning not originally intended and not justified by other Scripture.

Since all the above Scriptures are what Christ averred regarding His second advent and since in them appears no figurative language to make interpretation difficult, and since Christ must have ment just what He said in plain words, we take it that all that figurative language referring to His second coming should be used and interpreted in accord with these His words and not with contrary meaning, else we make Christ contradict himself or other writers contradict their Lord. The Lord's plain words must be the basis of interpretation of all figurative language on the subject.

CHAPTER II

SOME CAUSES FOR MISAPPREHENSION

Two things in this memorable discourse have apparently caused misapprehension. However, these can be explained satisfactorily and easily to any open mind. We refer to the statement in Matt. 24:14, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world as a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end (of the age) come."

This is one of those queries brought out by Christ and answered, as to the time when, as one of the things (v. 34) that shall be fulfilled before this generation passes. However, some labor to show that that gospel preaching has just now in the 20th century been accomplished and they are consequently looking for the Lord to come soon.

If we will not take Christ's own words for it, then let us see if we can find any other Scripture that will clear up the matter. The only true method of interpretation here would be to find out the meaning of the expressions, "all the world" and "all nations." Fortunately God has not left us in the dark. Luke wrote in Acts 2:5, "There were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews * * * * * from *every nation under heaven*." And from the enumeration of those sixteen countries following we see that Luke's conception of, "every nation under heaven," did not go beyond the then known world or Roman Empire. More to the point, and letting Scripture explain Scripture, see what Paul has to say in Col. 1:5, 6, "Ye heard the Gospel which is come unto you as it has in *all the world* bearing fruit," and v. 23, "Be not moved away from the hope of the

Gospel which ye heard, which was preached in *all creation under heaven.*"

This epistle was written in A. D. 61. Now compare Matt. 24:14, above, and we see the direct Scriptural fulfillment declared which agrees with the words of Christ, "All these things shall be fulfilled before this generation shall pass." "Then shall the end (of the age) come."

Thus we see that the Gospel was preached in all the world in Paul's day, which was before that generation passed. And do not they make a mistake who would say that Jesus' words were not accomplished until now; and having left the Bible and taken to a theory, they try to make the Scriptures bend to suit the theory?

The second cause for misapprehension in the discourse is the language of vs. 29-31, "The sun shall be darkened and the moon shall not give her light and the stars shall fall from heaven and the powers of heaven shall be shaken—and they shall see (Greek, *opsontai*) the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

Some say this is too majestic to describe the fall of the Jewish temple and the end of the age, and as to "The Son of Man coming in the clouds," this has not yet been witnessed and consequently is not fulfilled, though Christ says, in vs. 34 and 35, "Verily I say unto you this generation shall not pass till all these things be accomplished. Heaven and earth shall pass away but My words shall not pass away." Are they wise above the Lord himself?

However, the tension can be relaxed when we discover that such gorgeous language and almost the identical words were used by Joel in describing the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, Acts 2:16, 19, 20, "This is that which hath been spoken by the Prophet Joel. And it shall be in the last days * * * And I will show wonders in the heavens, and signs on the earth. Blood and fire and vapor of

smoke. The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon into blood before the day of the Lord come."

This is majestic language and we note four things. 1. The prophecy described a great event. 2. Peter said the prophecy was fulfilled in the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. 3. The gorgeous language was not meant to describe a spectacular, physical change in the heavens. Indeed, people would be saying to this day this has not yet happened if Peter had not distinctly said, "This is that." 4. It was fulfilled "in the last days," which meant to all then, the last days of the Levitical dispensation or the Jewish age.

But one says, "Why did Joel use gorgeous and misleading language?" This is not for us to attempt to answer here, further than to say, it was customary for the prophets and other oriental people to use highly rhetorical figures to describe the downfall of nations and great events. We refer you to some of these should you wish to look them up: Isa. 13:6-14; 19:1; 27:13; 34:1-5; Joel 2:1-11; Micah 1:3, 4; Dan. 7:13, 14.

We refer to the prophecy of Joel as fulfilled in the coming of the Holy Spirit without any change in the physical heavens in order to show and say that we believe this is what happened and what was meant by the prophecy of Isaiah which Jesus quoted as referring to his second coming in this misapprehended passage in question, Matt. 24:29-31—fulfilled without physical change in the heavens.

The prophecy of Isa. 13:9-13, part of which was quoted by Jesus, had in it no more idea of the spectacular in the expressions "the sun shall be darkened, the moon shall not cause her light to shine. I will shake the heavens," etc., than had the prophecy of Joel with similar expression, which was declared fulfilled by Peter in the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost without change in the physical heavens.

Furthermore, Jesus could not have had any thought of the spectacular, for His words were spoken to the disciples whom He had previously warned and charged

(in the same discourse according to parallel in Luke 17:20 and following) that the Kingdom of God was not to be ushered in with observation, or else it would *make him contradict himself*. He simply appropriated the prophetic method of describing a great event, and the hearers understood it the same way.

In these days some read these words literally, and, since there is no history of the spectacular having taken place declare it is yet to take place; some say in the near future and some at the end of time, though Christ declared, All these things would be fulfilled in that generation.

And as we saw on page 23 that Mark's and Luke's expression "to see the kingdom of God come" is equivalent to Matthew's statement, "to see the coming of the Son of Man in his kingdom," so the reading of Luke 17:20, and its answer is the equivalent of the following: "When he was demanded of the Pharisees when they would see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom, he answered them and said, The coming of the Son of Man in his kingdom is not with observation." By this comparison of parallels we see that Jesus positively asserted that His coming would not be for fleshly eyes to behold. This, in turn, agrees perfectly with His words in John 14:19: "Yet a little while and the world *seeth* me no more," and John 16:10: "I go to my father and yet *see me no more*." Dr. Josiah Strong says: "To regard Christ's coming as personal, (i. e., bodily) and visible involves insuperable difficulties."*

"There are other Scriptures which speak of a spectacular coming in the clouds?" True, and wherever they appear, the essential truth of Christ's coming is the same, whether we read of Jehovah riding on a swift cloud in Isa. 19:1, or of one like the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven in Dan. 7:13, or of Christ saying, "Henceforth, ye shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven," Matt. 26:64, or of Jesus com-

* New World-Religion, page 295.

ing again "in like manner as" he went away, Acts. 1:11, or "behold, he cometh with clouds," Rev. 1:7, or of the Lord descending from heaven with a shout, (by the way, not "in like manner" as the poor translation of Acts 1:11 leads one to think), or the ones alive and remaining being caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, I Thes. 4:16, 17. All these Scriptures are given in the true prophetic style to people who understood them to be such and with no more thought of the spectacular than Joel had about the coming of the Holy Spirit, which was a great event quite distinct from Christ's second coming as clearly prophesied in other Old Testament Scriptures.

That Paul and the Thessalonians themselves had no idea of the spectacular in that much abused passage in I Thes. 4:15-17, is easily believed when we read II Thes. 2:1-3*, and reason that, if they had such a thought Paul would have stated it simply to the Thessalonians, who were troubled as to whether Christ had not already come since they had not seen Him come in the clouds, nor had He set up an earthly throne in Jerusalem, therefore He was not present. Had Paul believed in the bodily presence of Jesus at His coming that fact would be mentioned in just such an argument as this.

But since they had not been taught such materialistic notions of a spectacular coming but of one in the invisible world only, agreeing with Jesus' words "not with observation," therefore Paul could do no better than to use the expression "that day shall not come except there be a falling away first" (v. 3), and this had not yet taken place when this letter was written, about A. D. 52.

Since Joel's gorgeous language was fulfilled and we have no history of a physical change in the heavens, then we have no reason to doubt that Isaiah's words,

* II Thess. 2:1-3, "Now, *** touching the coming (Parousia) of our Lord *** as that the Day of the Lord IS ALREADY HERE (Greek, enesteken), let no man deceive you, for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first."

quoted by Jesus in Matt. 24:29-31, in regard to the second advent, *could* also have been fulfilled without any spectacular and physical change in the heavens, especially since we have Christ's words, "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation," and "This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled."

The one thing above all other arguments necessary to set forth is the fact of the invisibility of Christ's reign in his kingdom. This established as Bible teaching, all other strange and erroneous twisting of Scripture to bolster theories, materialistic, and local, and still to take place in the future, will yield. That His coming to the Apostles was to be personal, sudden, unexpected, with power and great glory, not knowing the day nor hour, is perfectly correct, but *none* of these *demand* visibility, nor that we must believe such refers to *our* future. (See pages 50, 51.)

In the early part of the 19th century in our country one William Miller thought he read in Daniel that the coming of Christ would take place in the year 1843. He had many followers, and his assertions caused great consternation among multitudes of people. Some sold their farms and houses; some cast the goods from their stores into the streets to be taken by whomsoever they might; others completely lost their reason. The most serious result of this craze was, however, that many sincere Christians, made to believe that the Bible taught something not fulfilled as written, lost all confidence in the Scriptures and became skeptical and worldly. And well they might.

As emphasis on the literal, spectacular coming has thus done harm in the past, so it continues to do harm among sincere believers now.

Under such influence one may hear certain enthusiasts speak of "our absent Lord." This certainly would do harm when Jesus would have His *actual presence* preached for the encouragement of believers. Further, they say, "according to Matt. 24:14, the church

is only to 'witness to all nations'; it cannot hope to make progress against the evils all about 'till He come'." If Christ meant that He was to come as he told the disciples within their lifetime, (Matt. 16:28), then such pessimistic thoughts and feelings in this day will certainly have a tendency to laxity of effort. This certainly would harm the work of the kingdom on earth, and for this reason only is this subject now given such earnest attention by the writer. Those who teach that the mission of Christ has failed in the present dispensation, but will succeed in a future, certainly dishonor their Lord who said, "All power *is given* unto Me," (not *will be given*), commit grievous error, and have left the Bible teaching and betaken themselves to the doctrines and theories of men.

That the church was to be a "witness to all nations" and "then shall the end come" refers to the time before the end of the age A. D. 70, as the argument on page 32 proves, and does not refer to the 20th century, for now we not only witness for Him but also reign with Him. We say this because we believe He came to judge and to reign in the lifetime of some of His disciples, as He said He would (Matt. 16:27, 28), "For the Son of Man shall (Greek, *mello, is about to*) come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then shall he render unto every man according to his deeds. Verily, I say unto you, there are some of them that stand here, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."

Some, in opposition to the evident intent of the above Scriptures have suggested: "Give a person a Bible and let him read it, and he will conclude that Christ will come again visibly." In answer let it be said that such would not be so if the reader recognized the fact that the English word "see" is perhaps as often used figuratively, meaning "to obtain incorporeal knowledge" or "see spiritually," as it is used in the literal sense. The great blunder of theologians as well as common people has been to put a wrong emphasis

on that English word "see," which is used to translate different words in the Greek. Now let us offer a counter suggestion: "Give a scholar without preconceived ideas the original Greek text and let him read, and he will not arrive at any such conclusion as above," or "Give a person the English Bible and let him read it without preconceived notions and he will conclude that Christ was to have "come again" during the generation of the writers of the New Testament. And for him to conclude that Jesus is to come in our future, he must first mentally deny that the prophecy of Jesus regarding that coming was fulfilled as prophesied and as expected by the entire Apostolic Church.

In view of all the above, how can anybody say the second coming of Christ is yet to be? Will not such advocates have to leave the plain words of Christ, and take to figurative language, to build such a theory? We realize we cannot convert everybody, for, after all is considered, some will pull out the peg that has been driven as representing the coming of Christ soon, and drive that peg ten years or 50 or any number of years ahead, and go on proclaiming their theories.* If we were to prophesy, we would not hesitate to say that the year A. D. 2000 will be much heralded by this class of interpreters as the year of the Coming of the Lord after all the other numerous dates previously held have yielded to plain words of Scripture, as also has the year 1000 A. D., which was the most universally accepted date up to the present, and 1843 of Wm. Miller, (Millerite) fame, and October 1914, appointed by Pastor Russel and a host of others.

* Since writing the first edition of this book, it has been noted by the author that some of the very people who were preaching energetically in 1914 A. D., that the great world war, then beginning, was the biblical Armageddon, which would usher in the Millennium, with the visible coming of Christ, have recently begun to declare new dates for the coming cataclysm, some 1927 A. D., others 1935 A. D.

Let no one be deceived longer. The biblical Armageddon was no other than the great war which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem, A. D. 70. And the dates 1927 A. D. and 1935 A. D., or any others set for our future, have no sound biblical foundation whatever, in view of all that Jesus had to say about His own Second Coming.

CHAPTER III

SOME OBJECTIONS ANSWERED

(A) II Tim. 3:1; Luke 21:24; Rom. 11:25

But some will say, "Does not Scripture say in the last days of the world perilous times shall come, and evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse?"

No; the Scripture does not say that. It says: "In the last days perilous times shall come," etc. (II Tim. 3:1), but Paul wrote this to Timothy in the last days of the age before A. D. 70, and there can be no doubt he referred to those days, just as Peter said (Acts 2:16, 17): "This is that" which Joel said would come to pass "in the last days." We are unable to find any reason for believing that the perilous times spoken of were meant to be in our future, except that some have set up a theory that Christ is yet to come, and consequently the perilous times spoken of in Matt. 24:15-22 are yet to come, though Christ declared that this would take place in the lifetime of disciples then living, and that, when it came on them, they were to flee to the mountains (purely a local expression for the last days of that dispensation or Jewish age).

That the "wars and the rumors of wars" (Matt. 24:6) do not refer to the present evil times, nor yet to the distant future, but to time in the near future of the disciples is clear from the use of the Greek word "*mello*" in that connection: "And ye (the disciples) shall (*mello*, *are about to*) hear of wars and rumors of wars; see that ye (the disciples) be not troubled * * * * the end is not yet" (Matt. 24:6). If "*melleste akouein*" translated "ye shall hear" contained the meaning of 2,000 years or more in the future, as some teach in proclaiming that Jesus' prophecy referred to the present

world war, or to any other war that may come in the future for that matter, why should Jesus be so careful to so quickly add "but the end is not yet." From the context we are compelled to believe that the use of "mello" in this verse certainly has in it the idea of "about to be" heard. And the "not yet" of the same verse is equivalent to "not in the immediate future," for history informs us that it was not many years until the disciples themselves did actually hear of "war and rumors of wars"; and some of them lived to see the war which ended in the overthrow of Jerusalem. And as we saw by Scripture quotations on page 32 "the end" was to come as soon as the gospel was proclaimed as a witness to the whole known world, (Matt. 24:14) which proclamation had been accomplished before Paul wrote the Epistle to the Colossians in A. D. 61 (Col. 1:5, 6, 23).

All together we fail to find that the "perilous times" of II Tim. 3:1 referred to any far away future. The interpretation which makes this objection possible is another instance, apparently, of bending plain Scripture words to suit a theory. One should be careful to be consistent, and let Scripture explain Scripture.

We made the allusion that "the last days" refer to the last days of the Old Testament age which ended about A. D. 70, when the Jewish national worship came to an end and Israel ceased to be a nation. The following are some of the reasons for thinking so:

It is surely without question that Peter, James, John, Paul and the writer of "The Hebrews", all believed and taught that they were then living in the last days. "This is that," said Peter, "which was spoken by the prophet Joel; and it shall come to pass in the *last days*" (Acts 2: 16, 17). This was future to the prophet Joel, but not future to Peter, yet in the "last days." Speaking of Christ's incarnation, Peter in another place says: "Christ * * * was manifested in these last times for you" (I Pet. 1:20). And Heb. 9:26 says: "Now once at the end (or consummation)

of the age hath He been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." By these, we see that the sacrifice of Christ took place in the last of the age, or at the last of those times then existing. The same thought is expressed in Heb. 1:2, "God * * * hath *in these last days* spoken to us by his Son." And again Peter says: "The time is come for judgment to begin" (I Pet. 4:17). Peter wrote in the very beginning of the great war which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem and the abolition of Judiasm. This judgment of the Jews was to be at the consummation of the age. If "the time had come," then they lived at the end of that age. And the end of an age could not with any consistency or right use of language be drawn out longer than all the prior part of that age, so that "the end" could be made to include all the time from then until now and on into the indefinite future, as millenarians necessarily teach it. I Pet. 2:7 says: "The end * * * is at hand." I John 2:18 says: "It is the last time," and then John goes on to prove his assertion by direct statement to the people of his own day to whom he was writing: "as you have heard that antichrist shall come, even *now* there are many antichrists; whereby we know that *it is the last time.*" To believe these words is to accept our conclusion.

An interesting comparison which shows that Peter believed and taught that the scoffers' activity (which many now teach to be in our present or in the future) was really in his own day is seen by comparing I Pet. 1:20 with II Pet. 3:3. I Pet. 1:20: "Christ * * * was manifested for you in these last times" (Gk., ep' eschatou ton chronon); II Pet. 3:3: "There shall come scoffers in the last days" (Gk., ep' eschatou ton emeron). The Greek expressions are exactly alike except that the first has the word for "times" and the last, the word for "days". There is no question but that the first refers to the days in which Peter lived, and we can see no reason for saying the last does not refer to the

same days, except that it is necessary to maintain a theory, which we have shown to be wrong.

Since Peter referred to the last days of the Old Testament age in which "scoffers" would arise, then he does not refer to our day or to the supposed end of the world. With similar thought Paul wrote Timothy "that in the last days perilous times shall come" (II Tim. 3:1). There is no question but that the "perilous times" were to proceed the Second Coming of Christ. Now take note that Paul charged Timothy to be faithful until that coming (I Tim. 6:14) implying that Timothy would live until that event took place, which in turn shows that he would necessarily live through the "perilous times."

It will appear from the comparison of the 67 passages, in which occur the following several expressions, "the end of the age," "the end," "the last times or days," "the day or that day," "the day of the Lord or of God," "the great day," "the day of wrath," "the day of judgment," "the day of redemption," "the last day":

1. That they all refer to the same definite period of time.

2. That they all assume or affirm that that period was not far distant.

3. That the limit beyond which it was permissible to go in determining that period was the lifetime of the generation which rejected Christ, which in turn brings it to the period of the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple as marking "the close of that age"—the age the disciples asked about in connection with the coming of Jesus in Matt. 24:3, "What shall be the sign of thy coming (presence) and of the end of the age."

4. That we are now nearly 2,000 years advanced in the new or Christian age, which is to go on advancing as the parable of "the mustard seed" indicates. This new or Christian age is no other than the "age to come" (Greek, *aeon* with *mello*, *age about to come*) of Matt. 12:32, Eph. 1:21, Heb. 6:5, and "world about

to come" (*oikoumenee, inhabited earth, with mello*) of Heb. 2:5. And without a doubt Peter referred to the same time when he said, "we look for a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (II Pet. 3:13), meaning a new order of things among men, not an entire absence of temptation and possibility of sin, nor yet a reconstruction of material elements which had been melted or burned over, according to a literalization of the figurative language of the preceding verses. The use of the words "we", including the writer himself, together with "ye" of verse 14, and the expression "seeing ye knew these things before" of verse 17,—meaning that the ones addressed knew before Peter wrote—show conclusively that he referred to the people of his own day as looking forward to the dissolution of the old order and to the beginning of the new order, and not to something to begin yet in our future, as some mistaken interpreters would have us believe.

In conclusion, we feel that there can be no reason whatever in referring all these sayings to our future—which when done cannot be proved. In fact, they cannot be so interpreted except by taking particular words without any reference to the comparison of parallels or the meaning of the context. Therefore, we are compelled to take the stand that we do—that the writers of the New Testament believed and taught that they were then living in "the last days," which meant none other than the last days of the Old Testament dispensation, and not to a period 2,000 years in their future, nor to the supposed last days of time, of which there is no reference in Scripture.

Neither is there indication in Scripture that evils similar to those mentioned as about to take place before A. D. 70, would never be known in the future of that time. As the kingdom was to grow gradually, which the parable of "the mustard seed" indicates, then it is evident that sin and evil were not expected to be completely eradicated from the world at the "Coming"

of Jesus, although they would never afterwards be in such severe form as at that time. The condition of the world today (1918) is clear evidence that the kingdom growth has not advanced very far unto that attainment of the perfect ideal of the prophets and of Jesus. However, to teach the sudden, miraculous attainment of that ideal, which is not scriptural, and of course will not be realized, can only work harm to the natural, gradual growth of the kingdom.

Another misinterpreted passage appears in Luke 21:24, "Until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." Here is one sentence in a discourse (Luke 21:20-33) on the destruction of Jerusalem and concomitant features, which is taken out of its setting, and made to refer to "a parenthesis of time which has existed from that day to this"—according to Dr. James M. Gray of Moody Bible Institute—(a wholly arbitrary statement with no Scripture proof), when distinctly, clearly, verse 32 says, "Verily this generation shall not pass away till all be fulfilled." Consequently "the times of the Gentiles" of the passage in question is a subject of fulfillment in that generation as truly as is the other half of the verse, from which this has been torn by those who have a preconceived theory to fortify, and which other half no one, as far as we have learned, ever denied its having reference to that generation, which also history confirms.

But to the satisfaction of the one who, for conscience sake, must hold to the plain Scripture words as to the time of Christ's second coming during the lifetime of some of the disciples, that same history writer makes mention of the Idumeans (one of the Gentile nations) "tramping down this place" (Jerusalem), in almost the same words our Lord used in the passage in question. (See Josephus, Book 4, Chap. 4). This invasion of the Holy City by the Gentiles lasted from between A. D. 66 and 67 to A. D. 70, at which time the city was finally overthrown. This agrees perfectly with a parallel passage in Rev. 11:2, which says, "It is given

unto the Gentiles: and the Holy City shall they tread under foot forty and two months," or the identical three years and a half of the Idumean Gentile occupation of the city, as has just been mentioned.*

There is no reason whatever for saying that the plain words forty-two months, or their equivalent, 1260 days, of Rev.. 11:3, and other similar passages refer to so many years according to an arbitrary year-day theory, when, as it stands, it agrees with the facts of history.

Josephus in the same chapter above cited, ascribes the capture of Jerusalem and the overthrow of the Jewish commonwealth to the crime of these Gentiles, and so we may readily believe that God was using these Gentiles as His instruments for the terrible physical judgment He foretold would come on "that wicked generation," and when these "times of the Gentiles were fulfilled," that is, when the times of their use as God's instrument of judgment in the destruction of the city, were fulfilled, which history shows to have been in A. D. 70, "then shall they see (Greek, *opsontai*, the meaning of which is shown on page 57 f.f.) the Son of Man Coming" (Luke 21:27), and any other meaning is quite unnatural, and to make v. 24 mean "from the destruction of Jerusalem until now or until the end of time" is positively without any Scriptural reason, and, therefore, is to be rejected by right thinking interpreters, Dr. James M. Gray to the contrary. One good old saint was quite surprised when we said that certain prominent pre-millennialists twisted the Scriptures to

* Surely, no one will say that the Idumeans were not a Gentile (Gk., *ethnos*) nation? Some have been misled by the present meaning of the English word "Gentile"—one without Jewish blood—but that was not always the distinction in New Testament times, for then, it generally referred to the immediate neighbors of the Jews, dwelling in the land of Palestine. Samaria was an "ethnos." So was Idumea; so was Batanea; so was Galilee. Abraham was called the father of many nations (*ethnos*), (Rom. 4:17, 18), the Idumeans being one of them. To the Jews the nations or the Gentiles (*ta ethnee*) often meant no more than their nearest neighbors, dwelling on or within the borders of their own land. In this sense "ethnee" could be the designation of the lawless Idumean force who effected an entrance into the city and trod the sacred precincts of the temple for forty-two months previous to the final overthrow and destruction of the city.

suit their theory. In proof of this, let us submit that the quotation given (page 45) is a sample of their method of proving their theories by Scripture.

Another passage is sometimes used as if it were parallel to the one just discussed. We refer to Rom. 11:25, "until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." But upon examination one readily finds that it treats of an entirely different theme. The subjects are different. One is "the times of the Gentiles," the other "the fulness of the Gentiles." Of the first of which subjects it is predicted that they would "be fulfilled," the last to "come in," not "to be fulfilled or completed" as some seem to read it. To come "in fulness" here means, not that it is at once accepted by all mankind, but that it is made available to all mankind. We see Paul's meaning to be this: that the fulness of the Gentiles was to be accomplished when the Christian church was established on a non-Jewish basis. It *could* not "come in" in fulness until the fabric of Judiasm, the Mosaic economy, was obliterated, and this happened at the destruction of Jerusalem, and then "the fulness of the Gentiles" as well as of the Jews (Rom. 11:12) was ushered in. "The law" which Christ came "to fulfill" (Matt. 5:17) was then fulfilled. The Kingdom of God, so long looked for, came, which was the same as to "see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom" (Matt. 16:28). "It is not necessary to look for any later events as the fulfillment of this assurance than those of the Apostolic age," says Daniel Curry in Clarke's Commentary, in loco. We would not, indeed have anyone believe that the destruction of Jerusalem *was* the coming of the Son in His kingdom. The destruction of Jerusalem and its temple was only an outward evidence of the end of the Levitical age. However, at the end of that age the "parousia" was to take place, a very distinct and separate event.

The coming (parousia) of the Son, we understand, is the correlate of the coming of the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God, we understand, means the

"reign of God" in the hearts of men (few or many). The parousia, however, was an event ushering in or beginning that kingdom's peculiar "fulness." Paul says such "reign of God" was limited in the Old Testament saints, "blindness in part hath happened in Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in" (Rom. 11:25, also verses 11, 12).

In the fulness of time Christ came in His first advent; He preached, and instructed His disciples to preach, that that kingdom was near at hand. It was still being so preached when John's Revelation was written, some time between A. D. 54 and 70. He wrote of Jesus' return and Revelation and the things that "must shortly come to pass" (Rev. 1:1), and "which shall (Greek, *mello*, *is about to*) be" (verse 19), "for the time is at hand" (verse 3); He died and rose again to make its inauguration possible; he gave the Holy Spirit at Pentecost to be a guide and help to the disciples and believers to proclaim that same truth and "witness to all nations" (Matt. 24:14), which witnessing, having begun at Pentecost, continued thereafter until every nation and every creature had been reached, and that before A. D. 70, according to Paul (Col. 1:5, 6, 23): while Jesus himself during the same period, having ascended to the Father, "tarried, expecting until His foes," that wicked generation, be put under his feet. But that "reign of God" did not and could not come in its "fulness" either to Gentiles (Rom. 11:25), or the Jews (v. 12), until the whole visible fabric of Judaism, the Mosaic economy, was obliterated, and this happened only at the destruction of the temple, which marked the end of the Levitical age. The observations of Conybeare and Howson on this point are clear, "While the temple worship still existed the way of salvation would not be fully manifest" ("Epistles of St. Paul," Chapter 28).

The writer of the Hebrews speaks definitely on this point (Heb. 1:1-3; 9:8-10; 26-28; 10:13, 25, 27), saying: "God spoke in times past by the prophets" (1:1), and

having lived in the end of those days, said, "God hath at the end of *these* days spoken unto us in His Son," (v. 2), and "when he had made purification of sins sat down on the right hand of God" (v. 3). Again he says, "Having now at the end of the ages been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, Christ shall appear a second time unto salvation" (9:26, 28); that is, for the purpose of bringing in the "reign" of God in its "fulness." So then, the setting up of that kingdom did not take place at Christ's crucifixion, nor at the resurrection or ascension, nor yet at Pentecost, for He had not yet appeared that second time at the writing of the Epistle to Hebrews, as we see in Heb. 10:25, "but exhorting one another, and so much the more as ye see the *day* approaching," that is, the day of the Lord, the time of his appearing, after "his enemies had been made his footstool" (v. 13), "for yet a little while, and he that shall come will come" (v. 37). And the fulness or perfection of salvation had not come because the way into the holy place had not yet been made manifest, neither could it be while the first, or outer, tabernacle was still standing (9:8, 9), "until a time of reformation," (v. 10), that is, the introduction of a new order. The crisis between the old dispensation and the new era took place only at the destruction of the old order in the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, which occurred A. D. 70.

In regard to the Jews, some seem to think a curse and "blindness in part" is *now* resting on them. However, it is a significant fact that we today do not think of a curse resting on a Jew—a thought taken from Matt. 27:25—after he becomes a Christian; neither do we think of his now having a "blindness in part" on him—a thought induced by a wrong setting as to time, of Rom. 11:25—after he becomes a Christian; nor do we believe that the unrepentant Jew is in any more precarious condition of soul than any unrepentant Gentile. Both can find salvation by believing on the same Jesus, for there is "no other name under heaven given among

men wherein we must be saved." Some Jews have believed and have found the joys of salvation as have countless others who are not Jews. All Jews could obtain the same experience as can all others. The Jews are not becoming Christians in greater numbers, not because that "blindness in part" is still on them, but because they still do not accept the salvation of Jesus as is the case of any sinner who does not accept. It is widely believed that the "fulness of the Gentiles" (Rom. 11:25) will occur at the Lord's return, but some kind of blindness must have happened to certain Gentile theologians, for they seem never yet to have realized that the "fulness" of Jews, mentioned by Paul in Rom. 11:12, as certainly as of the Gentiles (verse 25) was to "come in" at the second advent of the Lord in the lifetime of some of Christ's contemporaries, namely, at the end of the (Levitical) age, which our argument shows to have been about A. D. 70.

This wrong view in regard to the Jews—that official blindness is still on them, which Christianity of the present age cannot overcome—we believe, has led Christian workers to disregard their duty of propagating "missions for Jews" as well as "missions for Gentiles," which, by the way, is another reason why so few Jews are getting the Gospel light. When the Christian world sees the light of truth on this subject, Christian workers will get anxious about the non-saved among the Jews as among the Gentiles. We believe that no "blindness in part" can *now* be on the Jews, because, if we believe the prophecy of Jesus and the apostles regarding the coming, then Jesus has come, and at His coming that "blindness" was to have been overcome.

Some will say, "Does not Christ say His coming shall be as the lightning?"

If we take notice, it does not say it was to be as the brightness or visibility of the lightning, but particular mention is made by Jesus, "as the lightning cometh out of the East and shineth unto the West, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be" (Matt. 24:27;

Luke 17:24). Not visibly, but extent, is the emphatic thing and is certainly incompatible with local bodily presence in either case. In fact, it seems that the Saviour was careful to limit this figure of speech so as to eliminate the possibility of thought that the coming was to be visible, as one may perceive in the parallel in Luke 17:20-24. The coming of the kingdom was to be without observation (verse 20); it was not to be local, but "within you" (v. 21, 23); you shall desire to see, but you shall not see it (v. 22); for, in extent it is to be universal, as the lightning that lightens from one part of heaven to the other (v. 24). The latter is exactly what the Son of Man is doing, lightening the whole world. The parallel in Matt. 24:27, says this coming as the lightning as one of the "all things" in v. 34, was to be fulfilled in that generation, which agrees with Matt. 10:23 and 16:28, that the coming of the Son of Man was to be in the lifetime of some of His disciples.

According to this comparison of parallels, we see that the disciples were plainly told of the invisible nature of the coming, so then, least of all could we believe that Luke, the writer of the words compared, should in another place (Acts 1:11) teach a visible coming, as many in this day attempt to make a poor translation "in like manner as" teach. To believe so would make Luke contradict himself as well as his Lord. (On this passage see a fuller discussion on page 62.)

Likewise, other passages in the Epistles and Revelation which may seem (taken separately) to indicate a visibility of the coming, some of which were written before the Gospel narratives, certainly would not be written with any intention of teaching contrary to the Lord's words. We cannot think that the Apostles ever expected Christ to come visibly in his second advent. Such doctrine began to be taught only in later days.

But someone may ask: "How can one explain away the Scripture passages, which say that we shall *see*

the Lord's return, such as Matt. 24:30; 26:64; Acts 1:11; Rev. 1:7?"

One need not try to explain away these Scriptures, for they are not formidable when properly considered and interpreted.

1. Matt. 24:30 has already been considered as a part of a larger passage, Matt. 24:29-31, on pages 33-35. There we find the passage in question is language from the Old Testament written in a picturesque, prophetic style, with no thought of the spectacular, and to people who understood it as figurative. Therefore, we have no right to take the word "see," a part of that prophetic language, and today read it as if it meant "*see*" with our *fleshly eyes*.

2. Matt. 26:64 is also an Old Testament quotation from Dan. 7:13, written in an oriental style, which originally was a vision. We see no reason for reading, in this day and age, the passage in question other than that it actually was to be accomplished in the invisible world, as the word "see" does *not* necessarily demand fleshly eyes to fulfill its meaning.

3. Acts 1:11. It is true that the disciples saw Jesus with fleshly eyes leave the earth in the ascension, but this passage does not say that they would see Him return. It does *not* read as some seem to read it: "This Jesus you *shall see coming* in like manner as you have seen Him go." The word "see" is used only once and that refers to His leaving them. When properly translated this passage has nothing more nor less in it than in this paraphrase, "This Jesus which was received up from you into heaven shall come again as truly as He was taken and the latter you know to be a fact because you have seen Him go." The idea of the manner of His coming is not necessarily in this passage as you may see in a fuller discussion on page 62.

4. Rev. 1:7 is also a direct quotation from the Old Testament, picturesque language written to a people who were accustomed to reading and interpreting such language in its true significance, which in this case

would not be to understand "see" as referring to "fleshly sight," simply because Jesus had already told them: "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation. * * * You shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man but you shall *not see it*" (Luke 17:20, 22), "Yet a little while and the world seeth (Greek, theoreo) Me no more" (John 14:19); "I go to the Father, and ye see (Gk., theoreo) Me no more" (John 16:10); also the argument that that coming was to be universal, "from the East extending to the West," of Luke 17:24, and "every eye shall see him" of the passage before us disproves the idea of local seeing with fleshly eyes, because it presents a physical impossibility. Still another argument against the word "see" of this passage referring to fleshly sight is the fact that Heb. 9:26, 28 teaches us by contrast of words that the two advents of Christ were different as to their appearances. "Now once * * hath He been manifested (phaneroo) * * , so Christ also * * shall appear (optomai) a second time." The first coming is indicated by a word that means to bring to light, to show or display; but the second is denoted by a word that signifies incorporeal knowledge or spiritual sight in 50 instances out of 57 in the New Testament. And, indeed, why were two different words used in the same context unless a distinction was meant in the nature of the perception?

This same contrast of words is seen in Matt. 24:30, "Then shall appear (phaino) the sign of the Son of Man * * and they shall see (optomai) the Son of Man coming." The use of two different words in such close connection certainly has some significance. The first word "phaino" is used in verse 27 preceeding, speaking of the lightning which is something visible to natural eyes and in verse 30 refers to some visible sign, the nature of which we will not discuss here further than to say that the statement doubtless refers to part of the question of the disciples in a former verse of this chapter, (Matt. 24:3), "What shall be the sign

of thy coming (presence) and the end of the age." The thought of some visible sign being necessary or desirable goes to bear out the contention of this book, that the actual "parousia" (coming or presence) of Jesus was understood by the disciples as invisible to natural eyes. For, were the presence or coming of Jesus to be visible, no other visible sign would be necessary or even thought of by the disciples. The last word "optomai" (see) is used very many times in the New Testament,—some of which instances will be cited in the following section,—where it can mean nothing else than mental perception or spiritual sight. Therefore, we feel perfectly safe in saying that the use of the word "optomai" by Jesus in regard to His "coming again" meant only that inner sight or mental perception, both here and in other places, which previous argument, and that which follows, more fully sustains.

Another interesting discussion by Jesus which shows by contrast the invisible nature of His return, and which shows by contrast of Greek words that the two advents were different as to their appearances, is to be seen in John 16:16, 17, 19, "A little while and ye shall *not see* (Greek, *theoreo*) me; and again, a little while and ye shall *see* (Gk., *optomai*) me." The first word "see" in each verse refers to one result of His going away as He mentioned in verse 10 preceeding, for it is the same Greek word "*theoreo*" in each instance, a denial that sight with fleshly eyes is to continue. So, with like import, in John 14:19, Jesus states: "Yet a little while and the world seeth me no more," using the same Greek verb "*theoreo*" translated "see" and meaning "see with natural vision," as is used in John 16:10 and in the first phrases of verses 16, 17 and 19. But from the English translation of the last word "see" in each instance, one, not acquainted with the Greek, would naturally suppose there was to be an affirmation after "a little while" of what was denied before. But this is not the case inasmuch as the second word "see" is not the same word in Greek, but is that

other word "optomai" used by Jesus when he wished to designate incorporeal knowledge or spiritual sight some of which instances will be cited in the following section.

This Greek word "optomai" is the same word used by Jesus in referring to His "coming again," translated "see" in Matt. 24:30, "they shall *see* (optomai) the Son of Man coming"; in Matt. 26:64, "henceforth, ye shall *see* (optomai) the Son of Man coming"; in Rev. 1:7, "Every eye (eye, figurative for person) shall *see* (optomai) Him." This "Coming" is spoken of in other Scriptures as "about to come"; when "mello" is translated as it could be;¹ "before some then living would taste of death;"² "before the disciples had gone over the cities of Israel in preaching;"³ "cometh quickly;"⁴ "will not tarry;"⁵ and other like expressions. Therefore, when Jesus told the disciples that after "a little while" they would *see* (using that same word "optomai") him, it must surely refer to that "coming again" which was to take place before the generation then living would pass away, (Matt. 24:34), not to His resurrection body as millenarians say in order to try to make it agree with their theories, nor to some visible appearance on earth still in our future. The "seeing after a little while" of these verses cannot refer to the seeing of the resurrection body for it was to be seen with natural eyes; and we must not interpret John 16:16 so as to make Jesus contradict himself for He in this same discourse positively stated (John 14:19—quoted above) that after a little while the world would no more see Him with natural sight. Furthermore, it was still being so stated long after the resurrection period was past for the writer of The Hebrews said: "Yet *a little while* and he that shall come, will come and will not tarry (Heb. 10:27).

Should these passages be shown not to refer to a visible appearance in our future, then pre- and post-

1. Matt. 16:27. 2. Matt. 16:28. 3. Matt. 10:23. 4. Rev. 22:20.
5. Heb. 10:37.

millennialists have no consistent, biblical reason for their theories; certainly no consistent reason for using Heb. 9:28 and Rev. 1:7 as proof arguments for a visible return of Christ, for as already noted it is this Greek verb "optomai" which is used in reference to that coming in both passages.

CHAPTER III (B)

Meaning of "See" as it Refers to Christ's Second Coming

The word "see" in these passages is translated from the Greek verb *optomai* and its derivatives, which does not at all times require fleshly eyes to fulfill its meaning, but, in fact, the word is used often where sight with "fleshly eyes" is not meant or is impossible. For example, note the following references:

(a) Matt. 5:8: "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall *see* (*optomai*) God." This is not with fleshly eyes, for God is Spirit, and has not been and can never be so seen.

(b) Matt. 27:4: "*See* (*optomai*) thou to that," and Matt. 27:24, *see* (*optomai*) ye to it," do not carry any idea of sight with fleshly eyes.

(c) Luke 13:28: "Then shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth when ye shall *see* (*optomai*) Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of God, and (see) yourselves thrust out." Not with fleshly eyes, for it describes something after death in the heavenly world.

(d) John 3:36: "Shall not *see* (*optomai*) life." Not with fleshly eyes, because an inner spiritual sight is clearly meant.

(e) Acts 2:17: "Shall *see* (*optomai*) visions." The meaning is directly opposed to any idea of fleshly eyes; likewise, Acts 16:9, "A vision *appeared* (*optomai*), the word "appeared" being the translation of the Greek verb in question.

(f) I Cor. 15:8: "And last of all he was *seen* (*optomai*) of me." Not with fleshly eyes, for Paul had been blinded as to his fleshly sight (Acts 9:8, 9), and it was while in this condition that "He was seen of me."

(g) Luke 1:22, Acts 26:19, II Cor. 12:1, each has in it the word "*vision*," which is translated from a derivative of the Greek word in question, and visions are not objects of fleshly sight.

Having made a careful study of the use of the Greek word "*optomai*" by the New Testament writers, it appears that if the word had been translated "know," "mentally perceive," "see spiritually" as the sense would require in each particular instance—and that such is a permissible translation cannot be denied—much false doctrine on the subject of Christ's "coming again" would have been obviated. Of course the English word "see" is used with such figurative meaning very, very often, but somehow that natural craving to "see" the Lord returning has led to an interpretation of passages referring to His spiritual return not consistent nor possible when all that is said on the subject in the New Testament is considered. In any case only by considering the context and all the parallels on a given subject can one arrive at the true meaning of words as used by the original writers.

We feel that it was not chance that the Greek word "*optomai*" was so uniformly used when it referred to the "coming again". Were one to read in close proximity passages where that Greek verb is used, using the translation suggested above and according to Thayer's lexicon, we think one would readily see that it does not demand natural eyes to fulfill its meaning in regard to that "coming again".

¹"Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall know or see God spiritually" (*optomai*). ²"All flesh shall see spiritually or know (*optomai*) the salvation of God." ³"He that believeth not the Son shall not see (*optomai*) life, that is, obtain knowledge of or receive spiritual life." ⁴"Follow peace and holiness without which no man shall see (*optomai*) the Lord spiritually." ⁵"And they shall spiritually perceive (*optomai*) the coming of the Son of Man," that is, see

1. Matt. 5:8. 2. Luke 3:6. 3. John 3:36. 4. Heb. 12:14. 5. Matt. 24:30.

with spiritual sight that which is designated by the figurative expression "coming in the clouds."¹ "Henceforth, ye shall have knowledge of (optomai) the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power and coming (continued action) in the clouds."² "Christ * * * unto them that wait for him shall appear in a spiritual sense (optomai) a second time apart from sin unto salvation," that is, the Christ who was seen in body (phaneroo) the first time shall be spiritually seen (optomai) the second time.³ "He cometh with clouds and every eye (figurative for person) shall have knowledge of or perceive Him spiritually" (optomai).

Since the word "optomai" in the first four of the above passages together with very many others in the New Testament unquestionably signifies incorporeal knowledge or mental perception, then how can millenarians successfully contend that the four times it is used to designate the Lord's "coming again" it certainly signifies sight *with* fleshly eyes—especially since there is no other definite Scripture to sustain that view?

We do not wish to affirm that the word "optomai" never is used when it signifies natural sight. But certainly with the passages opposed to a visible return, some of which are tabulated below, one can readily believe that the return of the Lord was to be invisible to natural eyes, but not unknown to the spiritual sight by any means.

Similarly, let us view in close proximity some of the passages which have been used for and against a visible return of the Lord.

First, against a visible return: ⁴"I go to my father and ye see (theoreo) me no more (with fleshly eyes)."⁵ "Yet a little while and the world seeth (theoreo) me no more (with fleshly eyes)."⁶ "The kingdom of God (equivalent to the "coming of the Son of Man in his kingdom—see page 35, on Luke 17:20) cometh not with observation."⁷ "Ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, but ye shall *not* see it."

1. Matt. 26:64. 2. Heb. 9:28. 3. Rev. 1:7. 4. John 16:10. 5. John 14:19. 6. Luke 17:20. 7. Luke 17:22.

Next, read those passages commonly used to show a visible return:

They are Matt. 24:30, Matt. 26:64, Heb. 9:28 and Rev. 1:7, quoted on pages 58, 59.

In the above, we see two conflicting sets of Scriptures, that is, if the English word "see" in the latter four passages be interpreted literally. Lest we have a Bible that contradicts itself one or the other set must be explained so that they agree. Since the idea of a visible coming in the last four passages is built wholly upon the word "optomai" which is used very many times when it can mean nothing other than spiritual vision, therefore, we will leave it up to the reader to decide which must yield. The truth will prevail in the end we feel sure.

Let the millenarians do their best and they cannot harmonize the first four Scriptures above with their theory of the fleshly, visible return of the Lord.

We see (not with fleshly eyes, either) that the four main passages* which are supposed by many people to mean that we shall see with corporeal eyes the Lord's return have about them abundant reason for any careful interpreter to say they do not contain such literal meaning. And if this is so, then the disciples did not expect a visible return of their Lord after the statement of Acts 1:11, as some assert, unless, perchance, they were still laboring under a mistaken notion as to the nature of the coming even as the disciples were mistaken on the way to Emmaus and said, "We hoped that it was he who should redeem Israel"—that is, to set up an earthly throne. But that was not Christ's expectation, nor can it be so now nor for the future, according to plain Scripture words.

And they today, who build up their argument for a visible return on these four passages and others like them, must be wrong, especially since there are definite passages denying a visible coming, (Luke 17:22), "Ye shall desire to see, * * ' but ye shall not see,"

* Matt. 24:30; 26:64; Heb. 9:28; Rev. 1:7.

John 14:19: "Yet a little while and the world seeth me no more"; (John 16:10), "I go to the Father, and ye see me no more," and since Jesus said He was coming while some of His disciples were still living (Matt. 16:28), and since, speaking definitely about seeing "the Son of Man coming in the clouds" and other connected happenings, Jesus says (Matt. 24:34): "This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled."

So there is no need to try to "explain away" supposed difficulties in the four main Scriptures that have the word "see" in them, for it is clearly perceived that "see" does not require fleshly eyes to fulfill its meaning. And since this is so, and for this reason, these same Scriptures must be denied the right of use as "proof texts", for proof of the contention for a visible return of the Lord, should there be any, must depend on words and phrases that can mean nothing else, not on words of possible ambiguity. If the writer could have found but one passage of Scripture that definitely and positively asserted a visible return of the Lord, this book would not have been written.

If Jesus came when He said He would, he either came visibly (and we have no history from those who saw with fleshly eyes), or He came invisibly. The writer sees no sufficient reason to deny the latter; and those who do deny it build their argument on inferences and lack of positive Scripture proofs.

CHAPTER III (C)

Acts 1:11 and Others

But some will say, "How can you answer the definite statement in Acts 1:11, in which it says, 'This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven?'"

The puzzling thing to some who cannot read the original Greek is the expression, "in like manner as." But to go a little deeper than the English version we find these facts: (1) The word "same" is not in the original text, (2) the Greek words (on tropon) translated "in like manner as" in the passage in question is nowhere else translated with those words. The Greek words appear in the New Testament in but four places besides the passage in question, Matt. 23:37; Luke 13:34; II Tim. 3:8; Acts 7:28. The first three of these have the translation "even as" for the Greek words, the last one simply "as." The passage in question has the same words translated "in like manner as." Why this change? We see no reason other than that some doctrinal bias in the minds of the translators colored the translation. There can be no necessity of language, because in some of the passages named the meaning could not bear the translation "in like manner as" and maintain sense. Therefore, we maintain that Acts 1:11 can not bear the translation "in like manner as" because it makes the passage contradict other clear passages bearing on the subject of the second coming of Jesus. In fact, there is no other Scripture held by interpreters to refer to His "coming again" whose language could be made to mean literally "in like manner

as." We have already pointed out one such discrepancy in a passing reference to Rev. 1:7 on page 35.

Let the passage in question be translated as all other passages with "even as" or "as" (Thayer), and leave out the idea of manner, which is not required, and the whole difficulty disappears, and the doctrine of Christ's coming in Acts 1:11 agrees with other passages of Scripture on the subject.

It is the belief of the writer that the English translation of Acts 1:11, as it stands, has been the greatest cause of the modern, and, as we think, erroneous, teaching of a visible, local coming of Christ rather than an invisible, universal, not-of-this-world, spiritual coming.

Another difficulty for some is in the following: "Does not Christ say that Christians should observe the Lord's Supper 'till I come?' If He is now reigning, as some affirm, the church has absolutely no authority to celebrate the Lord's Supper as she does."

In direct answer we must say, "Emphatically, no! Christ did not say that. Therefore, the church today has the best authority to celebrate the Lord's Supper now." Jesus in His words of institution did not state any limit (Luke 22:19, 20).

It is true that *Paul* said to the Corinthians, "As oft as ye drink this cup and eat this bread, ye do show the Lords death till He come" (I Cor. 11:26). According to I Thess. 4:15-17, we see that Paul expected to be alive at the coming of the Lord, and would be "taken up." Therefore the Corinthians, who would have the same privileges, would have no more opportunity after He would come to celebrate the Lord's Supper, as assuredly those to whom the Apostle wrote would cease to exist on earth. It was evidently a local item. We today must read this as we do all other epistles with due consideration of items which apply to the local church only and not to the future.

Other passages that the pre-millennialists often quote to show that Christ has not yet come are Heb. 9:28, "Unto them that look for him shall he appear the

second time without sin unto salvation;" and Rev. 20:2, which says that Satan was to be bound for a thousand years. These, they say, show that there will be no sin after Christ's second coming, and since sin is in the world, therefore, Christ has not come.

But how they arrive at such conclusion, is hard to know, for neither here nor anywhere else in Scripture does it say that there is to be no temptation nor sin after Christ comes. As to Satan being "bound," one may turn for elucidation to II Tim. 1:10, which refers to Christ's first coming, where it speaks of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, having abolished death, which means that death has *lost its sting*, was *made useless*, of *no more account*. The verb "abolished" is translated from the same word used in regard to the devil in Heb. 2:14, "through death he might *bring to nought* * * the devil." In the first passage, the facts show us that the word "abolished" does not indicate cessation of death, for people still die; likewise, in the latter passage "to bring to nought (abolish) the devil," does not mean the devil is not to exist, but rather, that he has *lost his power, his grip*. Nor can such passages mean that there will be no more temptation, else man would become a machine with no free will to act, no wrong way to choose if he wills to. But, on the other hand, the Christian is given power over Satan so as to live right, if he will. This is a binding of Satan in accord with other representations in Scripture. (See a fuller discussion on pages 70-72.)

And Christ's reigning in righteousness with His saints consequently cannot mean that there will be no more sin, but that His reign shall be a righteous reign in justice, in truth, though not all shall bow to him at the beginning of that reign. A good ruler on earth may establish ideal laws, but because He is on the throne and has those ideal laws is no assurance that every subject is going to obey; yet the rule may be of a righteous order. Similarly, the rule of Christ is the highest order

but as long as man is on the earth men will sin, it seems.

We believe, however, that the faithful will increase more and more until the end of time, if there is to be any end, the kingdom having begun as the mustard seed of the parable (Matt. 13:31, 32), and as the parable of the leaven teaches (Matt. 13:33), with very small beginnings, about A. D. 70, after the coming of Christ as prophesied by Christ Himself, and has kept on growing and increasing until now one-third of the population of the earth is evangelized. And Christ is now reigning, doing His best, to have us do our best.

However, there is one passage of Scripture among others which we wish to mention here, whose wrong interpretation has led the post-millennialists to think that all the world will be converted before Christ comes. We refer to I Cor. 15:24, "Then cometh the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God." The mistake has been to interpret "the end" of the passage in question, as referring to the end of time, which it does not say; and, to think that "the kingdom that Christ shall deliver up to God" is the Kingdom of God or of Christ, namely, the mediatorial kingdom, which had so often been spoken of as "at hand," and which was to be ushered in at Christ's second advent. This the passage also does not say.

Therefore, since there is no other passage in all the Bible on which any man who has looked into the matter would care to base a doctrine of the end of the world; and since "the end" is an expression used several times by Jesus particularly in answer to the question of the disciples, "What shall be the sign of thy coming (parousia) and the end of the age" (Matt. 24:3)? Jesus here refers to "the end" mentioned by the disciples, saying, "the end is not yet" (v. 6): "He that shall endure unto the end shall be saved" (v. 13), "Then shall the end come" (v. 14); all of which refers to the time before that generation then living would pass away (v. 34); and since writers of the New Testa-

ment, heretofore mentioned, including Paul himself, used the same expression to designate the end of the (Jewish) age or dispensation, at which time the coming (parousia) was to take place, then it would not be natural nor reasonable to interpret the same expression used by Paul in this place, without positive proof to the contrary, to refer to "an end" other than that of the Jewish age, as the coming (parousia) is particularly spoken of in the sentence just preceding and in the closest connection with it, "Afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming (parousia); then cometh the end" (v. 23, 24).

Having arrived at the conclusion that Paul meant by "the end" just what his Lord meant, "by whose word" he obtained his knowledge of "the last things" (I Thess. 4:15), and having found nothing positive to the contrary, now comes the query as to the interpretation of "the kingdom" in the passage in question.

It cannot refer to the Kingdom of God, the mediatorial kingdom, for it was to continue forever, "Of His kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:33); "the eternal kingdom of our Lord" (II Pet. 1:11). Jonathan Edwards says, according to Dr. Urmy, "Christ's mediation between the Father and the elect will continue after the end of the world, and He will reign as a middle person between the Father and them to all eternity." Since we find this to be so, the alternate meaning of "the kingdom" of the passage would be the Messianic kingdom, of which Christ was King. This then was the kingdom which Christ was to cease to administer, after ascending to the Father, and reigning there until all enemies were put under His feet (I Cor. 15:25), that is, all the wicked rejecting Jews of that generation as seen in Matt. 23:34-36. This reduction of His enemies took place at the terrible judgment of the Jewish nation at the destruction of Jerusalem, after which time Christ's kingdom, freed from the retarding force of Judaism, proceeded to grow as the parable of the mustard seed suggests at the ushering in of His

kingdom, which was to take place at the end of that age.

Thus we see that this passage is most naturally and reasonably interpreted as referring to events about to take place in Paul's generation, which in turn forces one to the conclusion that the kingdom mentioned is the Messianic kingdom which came to an end about A. D. 70, when Christ began His reign in His mediatorial kingdom. For, was not Jesus sent "only to the lost sheep of the House of Israel" in His first advent (Matt. 15:24), and to make sacrifice for the world and to prepare to begin His mediatorial reign of the Kingdom of God sometime in the near future of His disciples, according to plain words of Scripture? We are forced to conclude, also that the world is now to be converted through our instrumentality, Christ having come in His second advent, we reigning with Him and having his parousia (presence) with us. "As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (John 20:21).

The question has often come to the writer's mind, What advantage can anyone see in Christ's coming to destroy the world and wind up affairs after the wickedness in which it had remained so long has been overcome and the world converted? Certainly there is no Scripture which, properly interpreted, teaches any such doctrine. It would seem to us that God would then wish the world to continue even more than when it was in its wickedness. Our interpretation sees the world abiding long after the wickedness has been overcome, of course. And, again, what advantage can anyone see in contending for a visible return of the Lord after Christ Himself said, "It is expedient for you that I go away (become invisible)" (John 16:7)? And Jesus never abrogated that statement, but rather enforced it forever, saying, "I go to the Father, and ye see me no more" (John 16:10). It is true, certain other Scriptures seem to suggest a visible return when taken out of their context, and when figurative language is made to answer for plain speech, but a careful inter-

pretation, comparing Scripture with Scripture, will reveal the fact that Christ is here now reigning in His invisible presence. The difficulty of all the highest service of life is that the spiritual is invisible. Were Jesus present visibly, it is supposed that greater results would accrue from Christian service, but the supposition must be mistaken, inasmuch as He to whom such service is infinitely dearer than it ever can be to ourselves has determined that the manner of Christian evangelism was to be with His invisible presence ever after the ascension, "Yet a little while and the world seeth Me no more" (John 14:19); "I go to the Father and ye behold Me no more" (John 16:10). The great duty and privilege of the church is to realize the presence and influence of the Invisible. The church is actually to see the Unseen.

Again, I John 3:8 says "The Son of God *was* manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil." The pre-millennialist says the works of the devil will be destroyed at Christ's second coming, that Christ's mission on earth has failed as far as overcoming sin is concerned until then. They therefore pass by this important passage just quoted, or else make it read as it does not: "The Son of God *will be* manifested, that He might destroy the," etc.

CHAPTER III (D)

Rev. 20; and the Greek word "Mello" in the Book of Revelation

There still remains another Scripture which in recent years has been much abused, Rev. 20: 1-6. In this as with other Scriptures on the Coming, interpretation must be both consistent and accordant with Christ's own words on the subject.

In our search, we have found no good biblical authority who does not believe that the "angel" of verse 1 is a figurative expression for Christ, and certainly no one will contend that the symbols in the vision of John demand a literal or physical chaining of the dragon with material chains. He is a spirit being, and no spirit being can be restrained by anything material. Further, we read that John saw (v. 4) the "souls," not physical bodies of those called "blessed and holy" in v. 6, who lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. And since Satan, who is an invisible being, has earth as his field of operation, so Christ and the souls who live and reign with him could also "reign on earth" during the thousand years invisible to our eyes.

With practically everybody in agreement with the above propositions, we feel it to be quite consistent and in perfect agreement with other Scriptures on the second advent of Christ to interpret Rev. 20:1-6, according to the following:

1. Since the entire Book of Revelation is really a treatise on Christ's second coming and its concomitants, and since Rev. 20 is the logical place in the argument for a description of that coming, therefore, the coming of the "angel" of verse 1 represents the coming

of Christ in His second advent—at least one phase of the Coming.

2. Since Jesus said He was coming again in the lifetime of some of His disciples, according to Matt. 16:28, and, before that generation passed away, according to Matt. 24:34, therefore, the chaining of the dragon, the devil, which was to take place at the coming of the “angel” (Rev. 20:2), actually took place at the time indicated, namely, at the close of the Jewish dispensation or age. The latter, all know, took place during the terrible tribulation of the Jewish wars, when the sacrifices in the temple ceased, never to be resumed. Of the chaining of Satan, even common sense would teach that all that is meant is the repression and restriction of Satanic power during the period indicated, even if we did not have Scripture to sustain the truth, (and there being no Scripture to the contrary), for did not Jesus infer that there would be sin during the millennium, when He said, “Whosoever speaketh against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him, but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this age (Greek, *aionos*), neither in the age to come” (Matt. 12:32)? The “age to come” was understood, then, as well as now, as the age to be ushered in by the coming of Christ. Consequently, sin was to be possible during the millennium. If sin was possible, then Satan was not bound in the sense that he could not tempt. And, furthermore, men were not to be machines without free will, which would be the case if there were but one way to go, and no possibility of sin, no temptation.

This binding of Satan agrees with the first prophecy in the Bible regarding Christ, “it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel” (Gen. 3:15). To the same effect are the words of our Lord (John 12:31) “Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out.”

Before and during our Saviour’s incarnation, there was an activity of moral evil, everywhere ascribed in

the New Testament to Satan, far exceeding anything now known among men. Let anyone consider what Rome was in the days of Nero, and what Jerusalem was in the closing period of the Jewish commonwealth as described by Josephus, and he will concede that all has actually happened which is described in II Tim. 3:1-9 as referring to the last days of the age then existing, and which ended with the fall of Jerusalem. From that time (described as the time of the binding, repression and restriction of Satan) on down through the ages, knowledge of God and Christ as Saviour has been progressing remarkably, as will be shown in our quotations, pages 77, 78. And since events which transpired at and before the destruction of Jerusalem readily correspond to the declaration of Paul in this passage, then there is no call for anyone, in the absence of definite Scripture statements for it, to say and teach that events transpiring in the present are the ones meant by Paul.

Again, in our Saviour's time nearly the whole world was living in the sin of idolatry—a system which the Scriptures recognize as preeminently the work of the devil. But when we consider that that idolatry of the Apostolic age, so time-honored and inveterate, the popularity of the gods, the worship of whom had entwined itself around every act of public and private life, and then to see it as having wholly disappeared from the face of the earth, this goes to show restriction of Satan's power, or else makes one at a loss to account for the remarkable change. We believe it due to the presence of Christ in His reign with the saints, bringing righteousness, gradually, but certainly, until "every knee shall bow and tongue confess" Him as Lord.

Again, the abolition of Judaism was the removal of the most formidable obstacle to the progress of the Kingdom of God. By Judaism we mean all that man-made system built up after Israel demanded a king, rejecting the theocracy, which was God's intention for them from the first. This Satan induced, man-made, ritualistic system was that which was abolished, and

was one item in that binding of Satan that had to take place before God's theocracy in Jesus Christ could again be established. And believing it was ordered of God, we see in Rev. 20 the actual representation of that curbing of Satan's power.

We conclude, therefore, that at the end of that age or dispensation, about 70 A. D., a marked and decisive check (the cessation of an unparalleled activity of evil, the disappearance of a peculiar and persistent form of idolatry, and the abolition of Judaism, being the prominent features) was administered to the power of Satan, which check is symbolically represented by the chaining and imprisoning of the dragon in the abyss.

It does not follow from this that all error and evil were to be banished from the earth at the binding of Satan. It is enough to show that this was, as Schlegel says, "the decisive crisis between ancient and modern times; and that the introduction of Christianity has changed and regenerated not only government and science, but the whole system of human life."

3. Since Rev. 20:4 speaks of souls (not bodies) as living and reigning with Christ, one cannot rightly reason, as some do, that the reigning was to be on earth in visible form. But they live and reign with Christ; they are with Him where He is, "beholding His glory." Being "souls" not bodies, they would be invisible to fleshly eyes, which agrees with the words of Paul (I Cor. 15:44) about the resurrection body being a "spiritual body;" therefore not visible; and incorruptible, and immortal (I Cor. 15:52, 53), therefore not fleshly.

4. The thousand years, or millennium of Rev. 20:2-7 appears no where else in the Bible. Its meaning is much disputed among theologians. It is enough for us to say that we believe the "thousand year" expression to be a figurative expression, as all agree that other terms in connection therewith are figurative, and as such it becomes a synonym for the period of the reign of Christ as it spreads over the earth, bringing universal peace and religious prosperity.

Let us suggest here that Rev. 20:5-10 appears to be parenthetical in the chapter, separating the subject, the coming of Jesus and the reigning of souls with Christ, from the judgment scene which is depicted in verses 11-15, the latter section being introduced by the same words "I saw," found throughout the book, which marks that which comes under the personal observation of John.

In interpreting it, therefore, it is a mistake to separate the two sections making the latter section 1,000 years later than the former, inasmuch as it is true that everywhere else the coming and the judgment are shown to be in close connection. It must be the same judgment scene as Matt. 25:31-46, for it has in it the same "throne of glory," the same gathering of all nations, the same judgment according to their works, the same "everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels." And if this judgment is identical with that described in Matt. 25, it does not come at the end of the world, as many think, but at "the end of the age" as heretofore discussed and as will be shown in the chapter on The Judgment, Part III of this book.

This parenthetical passage seems to be the only part of the whole prophecy which was not to be fulfilled in the near future of the prophet. As to the time of the fulfillment of all the other prophecies of the Apocalypse, there are several definite statements, all of which preclude any idea of the time as future to us. Some of these we mention here:

The Greek word "*mello*" and its derivatives, which means something *about to* take place, or *at the point of* being done (Liddell and Scott), is used twelve times in the prophecy. The same meaning holds good in every place, and, in fact, were it translated by either of the two meanings just given in every instance, much misapprehension and speculation would have been precluded. Rev. 1:19, "Write * * * the things which shall (*mello, are about to*) come to pass after these;" Rev. 2:10, "Fear not the things

which thou are *about to* (mello) suffer; behold the devil is *about to* (mello) cast some of you in prison." Here in the Revised Version the Greek word (mello) is translated to bring out the proper meaning without a doubt, and that is, that the passage refers directly to the condition at Smyrna, and not to our future; Rev. 3:10, "I will keep thee from the hour of trial, which is to (mello, *about to*) come upon the whole world." The phrase "whole world" refers only to the then known world, or Roman Empire, not to the world as we now know it, for John wrote of what was to take place in his near future as "mello" certainly designates; Rev. 10:4, "I was *about to* (mello) write." To translate "mello" here with "will" or "shall," as is done at some other places, could not make sense.

Since we see that the Greek word "mello" is properly translated "*about to*" to indicate the true meaning in these places, therefore, there is no reason to give it a meaning that refers to our future when it is used in connection with the second coming of Christ, or, so as to state that Jesus has not yet returned simply because He was not seen visibly by fleshly eyes, or, when such would make it contradict other plain statements about the time of the coming. The Scripture, including John's prophecy, is against that idea in that it uses this Greek word (mello, *about to be*) when it refers to the time of that coming, as in Matt. 16:27, "For the Son of Man shall (mello, *is about to*) come," and Rev. 1:19, quoted just above. In this last reference "the things which shall (mello, *about to*) come," includes the coming of Christ. And all this agrees perfectly with that coming referred to as "shortly to come," (Rev. 1:1); as, "the time is at hand," (Rev. 1:3 and 22:10); and as, "I come quickly," (Rev. 3:11; 22:7; 22:12 and 22:20).

By these references we see that the limitation of time in the Apocalypse is not a mere conjecture. The nearness of the events it predicts are explicitly and repeatedly affirmed. Yet some interpreters ignore these

limitations of time, regarding the Book of Revelation as an almanac of political and ecclesiastical events to the supposed end of time. Surely this is an inexcusable blunder, and to our mind would carry with it the plagues spoken of in Rev. 22:18, 19.

RESUMÉ

RESUMÉ of some Scripture reference and arguments showing that the New Testament writers could not have believed that Jesus was to "come again" in visible form:

1. Because positive statements by Jesus precludes the idea. See Luke 17:20 and 22, and for argument, pages 34 and 51; also John 14:19; 16:10.

2. Because the disciples asked for a visible sign of the promised presence (*parousia*) about to come, Matt. 24:3. This request would have been unnecessary had they understood that the Coming was to be visible, but perfectly natural if that Coming was understood to be invisible to natural eyes.

3. Because of contrast of words in Heb. 9:26, 28, Matt. 24:30, John 16:19. See pages 53-55 for discussion.

4. Because Paul taught that henceforth Christ was not to be known in the flesh, 2 Cor. 5:16. Also, Paul failed to use the argument of sight when he declared that Jesus was not "already present," 2 Thes. 2:1-3. See discussion on page 36.

5. Because the three times that the word "see" is used of the "coming again," Matt. 24:30; 26:64; Rev. 1:7 and "appear" of Heb. 9:28, the word "*optomai*" is the original Greek word. This word is used at other times when it could be understood in no other way

than for spiritual, inner sight or knowledge as seen in the argument on page 57.

6. Because Jesus never used the expression "second coming" but did speak of His parousia (divine presence) as about to come as Judge and King. This word "parousia" is also used in some of the Epistles. But in its use there is no more idea of a visible presence when it refers to His "coming again" than that the abiding of the Holy Spirit was to be visible.

CHAPTER IV

WHY THERE IS NO HISTORICAL RECORD

Another question that arises is this: "Is it not strange that there is no record in church history that such an event took place?"

In answer, let us say, there was nothing spectacular to write about. There was nothing written about the spectacular in the heavens as prophesied in regard to the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. However, we have history of the result of the coming of the Holy Spirit. So we have abundance of church history to show the wonderful results of the spread of Christ's kingdom on earth after his "parousia," prophesied to take place in the lifetime of some of his disciples. By 325 A. D., in spite of fierce persecution, the kingdom had spread so fast that Christianity was declared the State religion by Constantine. On earth now 500 millions are professed followers of a reigning Christ. Compare the world and "The Kingdom" today after the last 100 years even.

"One hundred years ago, nearly every country in Asia and Africa was closed to the Gospel; there were almost no missionaries; now there are 25,000 Protestant Christian missionaries in foreign lands.

"Then the Bible had been translated into 65 languages or dialects; now into more than 500.

"Then there were contributed a few thousands of dollars a year; now \$30,000,000 are given to foreign missions by Protestant Christians.

"Then there was no native ministry; now over 112,000 pastors, evangelists, Bible women and other native Christian helpers.

"Then there were no single women missionaries; now there are over 6,000.

"Then there were a few mission schools started; now there are over 35,000 Protestant schools and colleges with nearly 2,000,000 pupils.

"Then there was not one mission press; now there are 160 publishing houses and mission presses, and 400 Christian periodicals published on the mission field.

"Then no American denomination, as such, was committed to foreign missions excepting the Moravians; now every denomination of any size has its home and foreign missions.

"Then there was not one mission hospital, orphanage, or other charitable institution; now there are 700 mission hospitals and over 500 orphanages and asylums.

"Then Judson, Carey, and Morrison had to labor from seven to ten years for a first convert; now there are more than 120,000 Protestant Christians added to the churches in heathen lands every year."

To go to the original thought, ask the church historian where Christianity is most obscure, and he will tell you "Just following the end of the Acts of the Apostles." Neander says, "There was a total want of sources for this part of church history." Renan, in his "St. Paul," speaking of this period, says, "Black darkness falls upon the scene; no more books are written; no more messengers are sent; the very voice of tradition is still." "History has a chasm of 60 to 80 years," said another. This is another reason for no historical notice, if we, indeed, could expect one.

The writer sees no reason, however, for rejecting the theory put by several authors that the silence in church history is expressive. Silence, where before A. D. 70, all was life and activity in the church. James says, Acts 21:20, "Thou seest, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews which have believed." Paul and others had established churches throughout the known world among Jews and Gentiles as the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles show. The Christian church had had a remarkable growth. What

became of the members and the ten thousands of believers? After the destruction of Jerusalem history records they had dwindled to two sects of Ebionites and Nazarenes. No strong church at Corinth; none at Thessalonica and other places founded by the Apostles were ever heard of after A. D. 70. Where did they disappear so quickly?

They were gone. What more evidence would be reasonably required to conclude that Matt. 24:31, 40, 41*, and I Thess. 4:17** had been fulfilled, and that that which is commonly denominated "the rapture of the saints" actually took place.

This "rapture" to us means but a change from the visible to the invisible sphere, and we believe that this is exactly what it meant to the Thessalonians. We note that the same Greek word translated "caught up" is also used in reference to Philip and the eunuch, which meant to the eunuch that Philip was no longer visible "for he was found at Azotus" (Acts 8:39, 40).

To believe that "the rapture of the saints" did take place as prophesied at the end of the age about A. D. 70, obviates the necessity of believing that John, the Apostle, is still living. Jesus permitted the disciples to believe and say that John would not die till He would come again, according to John 21:22, 23. Some today say that Jesus has not yet come, so the extreme literalists believe that John is still living somewhere on earth now. This indeed is perfectly consistent. The writer has met and conversed with some representatives of that faith. We submit that the expression, "If I will that he tarry till I come" (John 21:22), has no meaning if Jesus was to tarry for 1,800 years or more. But on the other hand, believe that the "rapture" did take place about A. D. 70, then the words have a meaning, and John was one of those who did not die, but,

* "And He shall send His angels—and they shall gather together His elect." Then shall two men be in the field, the one is taken and one is left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill, one is taken and one is left."

** "Then we that are alive shall together with them be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air."

with others who lived until the end of that age, was "taken up." To believe that John still lives is absurd.

Grant that Christ's own plain words had not failed of fulfillment in that generation as He declared and all is clear. And if they had a veritable accomplishment, no wonder that there should be a "total blank" in contemporary history; that St. Luke should stop the narrative and life of St. Paul in "The Acts of the Apostles" so unceremoniously and abruptly.

Since in its nature the "coming again" was invisible to natural eyes, no tangible evidence can be offered to show that it took place about A. D. 70, or at any other time. Jesus Himself recognized the impossibility of demonstrating spiritual issues in His conversation with Nicodemus according to the third chapter of John's Gospel. As we see it, it is a knowledge obtained by faith as is the case of other spiritual knowledge. That "*every* eye shall see him" is true in the same sense as, "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw *all* men unto me." The promise is for *all*, but men do not realize that truth until after they accept the Crucified One as their personal Redeemer by faith; so men do not and cannot realize "the Coming One" as "having come," except as they believe the Scriptures on the subject, when the sweet consciousness of the ever present One permeates the inner being of the believer. Furthermore, since this parousia (presence) was to be manifested in the future according to all the references in the New Testament, we could not expect that "coming again" to be recorded within the pages of that New Testament, even though it occurred about A. D. 70, there being no positive proof that any of the New Testament was written after that date.

Inner spiritual realizations are not subjects of historical record except as expression of belief, therefore we cannot expect to find an historical record of the "Second Coming" as having taken place either in sacred or profane history.

CHAPTER V

THE NECESSARY CONCLUSION OF THE WHOLE MATTER

Other questions or objections can be answered as readily and conclusively as any alert mind would require by simply letting Scripture explain Scripture where required. No Higher Criticism will be necessary to formulate this doctrine. No questionable methods of interpretation are pursued. The natural method of letting Christ's plain words be the basis and determinate factor for all figurative language used and for all doctrines taught by the Epistles on this important subject, is the only method of interpretation required. And such is the logical and true method, surely.

What great loss has come to the world from continuing to believe something which is not true, or that which cannot be proved by plain Scripture statements, who can tell? Then again, what advantage, in taking plain words of Scripture written clearly to apply to one time or age and say that they apply to a later one? For, to do so is to declare language figurative which was not meant so to be by the original writers. Both pre- and post-millennialists necessarily do this to maintain their respective theories. The former make allusions to the latter, sometimes calling them bad names, because they spiritualize Scriptures which refer to the Lord's Second Coming, when they themselves take plain words, referring to the time in which written, and make them refer to a later time, which use necessarily declares them figurative.

Let us venture to state that it is just as consistent to materialize passages of Scripture which refer to the

spiritual, interpreting them literally and figuratively, as it is to take literal, plain words and spiritualize them. Pre-millenarians seem not to grasp the former possibility.

Both pre-millenarians and post-millenarians need to study anew the Scriptures relating to these subjects and see how often they have taken plain words and used them as figurative, thereby making the Bible teach what was evidently not the mind of the Spirit.

Finally, it remains to be made clear that the contenders for both these well known theories must first deny the fulfillment of plain Scripture statements of Christ's "coming again" in the lifetime of the first disciples in order to maintain a future coming, for the Scriptures which refer to that coming are the ones used by many present day Bible students as referring to His coming in our future. We feel that this is contrary to sound logic and proper use of language.

W. E. B. (Wm. E. Blackstone), author of "Jesus is Coming," the great apostle of modern day pre-millennialism in the United States, recently wrote a letter to the author in which he says that he expected that the author's views would soon be upset, intimating that the Jewish temple at Jerusalem would soon be rebuilt and the bloody sacrifices re-established. This surely is absurd from the Gospel standpoint, though it is a perfectly consistent conclusion of pre-millennarian teaching. It rules out Christ's atonement and returns to the old Jewish bloody sacrifices during the millennium, which in his way of stating it "is immediately impending."

Many people, who now hold that pre-millennialism is scriptural will be surprised to learn that this is the logical outcome to which their leaders are being driven. G. Campbell Morgan, considered the ablest and sanest of their advocates in England, in published statements, concludes that the sacrifices of the Old Dispensation will again be offered for sin. Think of it, yet it is the logical and inescapable conclusion of pre-millennial

teaching. Mr. Morgan was one of the signers of that English manifesto of November, 1917, to the effect that the Second Coming of the Lord in visible form may now be expected any moment.

We are now living in the times of the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, not in the times of the Father and Holy Spirit as those aver who hold that Christ is yet to come and who speak, reverently to them, of their "absent Lord."

Were the church to preach with the full belief that Jesus is here in the world reigning in his kingdom much more good would be accomplished. We believe the results would be pentecostal in character. Rather than that the church is suffering harm because of the indifference of her children to the coming of the Lord in our future (which the Scripture nowhere states), she is suffering because of her failure to proclaim that Jesus has come and is now reigning and living within us and among us all. The advantage to be gained by looking forward to a coming of Christ is not to be compared to the sweetness and joy and help realized by acknowledging Him as having come in His "presence." Such is a mighty incentive when temptation to evil presents itself.

Certainly the Scriptures sustain the doctrine herein discussed. At any rate the only way to set aside the conclusions arrived at is to point out the text wrongly interpreted and bring to bear others which disprove the position in the light of those used by the writer.

We realize, as some will say, that the Church has always taught that the second coming was to be in our future and that some things herein are contrary to the older theologies, but we seem to see the possibility of some new light on even such a venerable subject. We believe that the Church, very shortly after the destruction of Jerusalem, the Apostolic Church having been raptured (I Thess. 4:17, fulfilled), and no New Testament canon yet being in existence, started wrong. And since then she has been clinging to these old theories

which must sooner or later give way to consistent, biblical knowledge on the subject.

If the actual accomplishment of the second advent is a fact, that is, if the plain words of our Lord have been fulfilled, we have no choice but to hold it fast in faith, and follow on to know its perfect harmony, especially since there is absolutely no Scripture saying that the coming of Christ would be in the future 1,800 years or more.

On the other hand, if we still say, "He has not yet come," we thereby teach that plain words do not mean what they say or that Christ and the Apostles said what was not to be true about his appearing, thereby leading the Church and people wrong. If the latter is admitted, as the pre-millennialists affirm, by their teaching in regard to the second advent, then we can see no reason to demand of the world to believe other things the Apostles taught. We, therefore, see that many of the religious teachers of the day are reading on dangerous ground. The doctrine taught in this book cannot be productive of harm such as has been and will be the case with the pre-millennial. With a general acceptance nothing will be lost to Christianity that we now have. On the other hand, we believe there will be a positive gain to the church in that it emphasizes the presence of Christ always with the believer.

We think we can close not being found guilty of argument not in keeping with our subject, "A Consistent, Biblical View of the Lord's Return."

PART TWO

The Resurrection of the Dead

CHAPTER VI

THE PROBLEM INTRODUCED

HOW are the dead raised up, and with what manner of body do they come?" (I Cor. 15:35).

The intelligent man wishes to know what is the truth about the resurrection as revealed in the Scriptures. That there is ambiguity in the biblical teaching seems to be evident, since so many divergent theories are held.

One school holds tenaciously to a material resurrection. They imagine they can see the graves opening and a re-creation taking place. But this is nothing more nor less than a re-creation, as, at the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth, among which was man.

Another school says that the word resurrection refers to the soul, and not to the body, and is but an expression for the beginning of existence after death, which, they say, was a necessary line of argument for that time and age, which knew very little about the life hereafter.

Let us study the Bible at first hand and obtain a consistent, biblical view of the resurrection as stated therein.

The word resurrection is translated from the Greek word "anastasis" which means, literally, "a standing again." It does not receive its meaning from the associated word, and, therefore, does not necessarily

maintain a connection between the buried body and that which "stands again." The soul in its fleshly body would be represented by the Greek word as "standing." When the earthly house was no longer habitable for the soul, Jesus and the Apostles spoke of the souls condition as that of "sleeping." When it was to take on its resurrection body it was designated as "standing again" (Greek, *anastasis*). This Greek word would have its meaning fulfilled perfectly, as far as the soul was concerned, were the soul not to take on the fleshly body, but some other body. The same body is not necessary in order to complete a true "standing again," as some have taught.

However, we do not believe that in the resurrection the soul takes another body, but rather that it takes one identical with "the body of humiliation," or mortal body, of the same person, in the sense of its being body to the same spirit and constituting with that spirit the same soul, the same self, the same personality. Paul calls attention (I Cor. 15:36-41) to the identity of the blade with the kernel that was sown. Various terms are used to indicate the differences between the present body of a person and his resurrection body. One is earthly, the other heavenly, one physical and the other spiritual, one corruptible and the other incorruptible. Jesus taught that in the resurrection men are like the angels (Luke 20:36). Paul expands this idea of a heavenly, spiritual, incorruptible body in numerous passages which speak of the changing of our mortal bodies (I Cor. 15:51, 52; II Cor. 5:2, 4; Rom. 8:11; Phil. 3:21). The emphasis is particularly placed on the idea that the resurrection body is not subject to the perpetual change which we think of characterizing matter. Christian teaching should be the same as that of Paul who expressly tells us (I Cor. 15:50) that the resurrection body is not a body of flesh and blood and, therefore, it is not to walk this earth after its resurrection in the same sense as we now do.

Science suggests that as the seen universe is com-

posed of matter, the unseen is composed of ether, and at every point of investigation we "are led from the visible and tangible to the invisible and intangible;" and science also concludes that the visible universe will in the end be swallowed up by the invisible. This agrees with Paul, as he says that eternal things are not seen (II Cor. 4:18). The body of the future cannot, therefore, be material, but is likely to be ethereal, a body to which matter could offer no obstacle and whose mobility would be incalculable.

The resurrection body, we believe, will be an invisible body as far as this world is concerned. Rather than, that all that which is now invisible will be made visible to fleshly eyes in the resurrection, all that which is now visible will come to a higher form of organization in the invisible realm.

"How are the dead raised up?" Does the word "dead" refer to the body in the grave or to the soul as disembodied? The amazing fact to be discovered by the material resurrection theorists is that the Scriptures nowhere affirm the resurrection of the fleshly body after the time of Christ. That expression is taken wholly or chiefly from the Apostles' Creed, which expression was inserted in the Creed about 340 A. D., and is not a biblical expression.

It was evidently inserted by the materialistic school and the modern church has inherited it, and without much question has accepted it as biblical, though the Nicene Creed has the correct expression, "resurrection of the dead."

The meaning of the expression "the resurrection of the dead" may be made clearer to the modern mind were it couched in different wording, which is its equivalent, namely, "the standing again of those who have laid down their earthly bodies." The expression itself does not designate with what manner of body they come or stand again. The manner of body is positively stated, however, in regard to *our* "standing again" in I Cor. 15:44, "It is raised a *spiritual body*," not with

flesh and blood (v. 50). To this extent our resurrection or "standing again," we understand, is different from that of Christ whose "standing again" was with His same fleshly body, not with the spiritual body (Luke 24:37-39); and different from that of the other individuals who were raised with fleshly bodies, namely, the son of the widow of Nain, Lazarus, or the ones mentioned in Matt. 27:52, 53, and others.

We certainly believe in the resurrection of the dead, though just as strongly disbelieve in the materialistic re-creation of the body now for years or thousands of years buried in the earth, because the former is biblical, the latter is not.

There is another query to be settled in our minds, the settling of which has much to do with a proper interpretation of the Scripture before us, "How are the dead raised up?" We refer to the word of Jesus to Martha with regard to Lazarus, "Thy brother shall rise again" (John 11:23). Lazarus arose to life on earth again at the word of the Master. His separated soul was reunited with its former earthly body. The query is, is this resurrection of Lazarus an exact representation of the resurrection of the dead spoken of by the Apostolic writers?

The writer holds: That since the sickness, death and resurrection of Lazarus was that the Son of God might be glorified, and that the disciples might believe; since Lazarus had to die again a natural death, that this resurrection cannot represent and was not intended to represent the future "resurrection of the dead," though even Martha, understood Jesus' expression "Thy brother shall rise again," to refer to that resurrection, for she said, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." However, Jesus corrected her misapprehension and said, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die," and then proceeded to work the miracle of reuniting the body and soul of Lazarus.

Before leaving this instance another misconception should be explained. We refer to the idea of the resurrection "at the last day." Some think of it as the last day *of the world*. In Jesus' answer He gave Martha to understand that the resurrection He spoke of was not "at the last day" of the world, but was abiding in Him then. If abiding in Him then, so is the resurrection of the dead abiding in Him now and for the future. In this connection let us refer to Jesus' words to the dying thief, "Today thou shalt be with me in Paradise." This leaves no thought or conception of his going to the grave and being raised at the last day of the world, but emphasizes the fact, "This very day is your entrance into Paradise." And does not this accord perfectly with the words, "I am the resurrection," not only for them but for us now?

It is recorded that a certain poor widow who was kind to a French soldier, was the recipient of a gift of a French note worth \$250 from him, but, as the widow had never seen the like, thinking it was but a beautiful memento and picture, had it framed and hung on the wall. Years after she was informed of the value of the note, which really meant a little fortune to her, and she exchanged it for something of more benefit than an ornament.

The widow was like Martha, for the latter took the words of Jesus, "Thy brother shall rise again," and put around them a cheap frame "in the last day." And so the beautiful doctrine of the "resurrection of the dead" is spoiled by many putting the frame around it of material re-creation and also tacking to it "in the last day of the world," neither of which did Jesus allow in his teaching.

"He that liveth and believeth in me shall never die." And certainly this is more comforting than the old Jewish conception which Martha held, and that which some hold tenaciously today, in spite of the words of Jesus on the subject.

Where Jesus says in John 6:39, "This is the

Father's will that all which he has given me I shall lose nothing, but should raise it up again *at the last day*," there is every reason to believe He has reference to the time when, "Before Him shall be gathered all nations," of Matt. 25:32. This was to be "When the Son of Man shall come in His glory," Matt. 25:31, and the time was to be in the lifetime of some of His disciples, according to Matt. 16:27, 28. It may be quite possible, too, that Martha referred to such a time in her expression, "He shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day," which would properly come at the time all others were "before Him," for judgment and reward, but at this time Jesus had a miracle to perform that the Son of God might be glorified.

Again, let us answer the question, Is the resurrection of Christ an exact representation of the resurrection of the dead spoken of by the Apostolic writers? We think we have sufficient proof in the expression of Paul that it does not, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven" (I Cor. 15:50), since Jesus himself, speaking to his disciples, who, seeing him after the resurrection supposed they had seen a spirit, told them that He was not a spirit, "For a spirit hath not flesh and bones as you see Me have," Luke 24:39. Paul states that the resurrection body shall be a "spiritual body," I Cor. 15:44. If so, it would be without "flesh and bones," and furthermore, if spiritual, would be invisible to our natural sight. Jesus resurrection was meant for proof of his divinity and Godhead, and a pledge of ours; and as we see it, was not intended to be an exact representation of the resurrected dead. Christ was to be the "first fruits" (I Cor. 15:20, 23) of these resurrected dead inasmuch as had He not been raised no one would ever have been raised, though the followers were to be raised, not in exact likeness to that of their Lord, but with a spiritual body invisible to our natural sight, fit to inhabit heaven, such as Christ would change to in the ascension, doubtless. As the life manifested in the flesh brought proof to

us of the eternal realities of the invisible world, so His resurrection in the flesh was necessary to bring proof to us of our resurrection in the spiritual body.

Jesus Himself gave us the idea that is representative of our resurrection when He talked to the Sadducees (Luke 20:27-38), where in verse 37, He says, "Now that the dead *are* raised even Moses showed at the bush." Here, Jesus cites the fact of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, then living, as proof that the dead *are raised*. And we know that they did not have fleshly bodies. Therefore, we can conclude that in our resurrection we will be as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, inasmuch as Jesus used such as proof of the dead being raised. And if in the resurrection "neither can they die any more" (v. 37), then such is to be the eternal condition, and if so, then they necessarily are unseen of fleshly eyes (II Cor. 4:18) "The things that are not seen are eternal."

That Jesus appeared in the room where the disciples were gathered (John 20:26) is absolutely no argument that Jesus had a spiritual or glorified body after His resurrection, as some wish to affirm, for Jesus had power to work such a miracle if such need be, after the resurrection as before, and enter the room unnoticed even with a body of flesh and bones, as He affirms was his physical condition.

From Jesus' word we are unable to construct any theory of the resurrection of fleshly bodies that have returned to dust; nor that all dying daily are to be raised at the same moment of time, but He does leave with us absolute assurance of immortality and eternal life for the believer. The manner, mode and condition of the resurrection and the doctrine are left for others, his disciples, to formulate.

CHAPTER VII

THE RESURRECTION AS VIEWED IN I COR. 15:15-57; II COR. 4:18—5:4

By far the fullest elaboration of the doctrine is given by Paul in I Cor. 15:15-57. However, even in this Paul was not clear enough to prevent difference of opinion as to how are the dead raised up and with what body do they come.

This difference of opinion is brought about chiefly because of the misconception of the doctrine of Christ's second coming, of which Jesus spake fully and plainly. Some leave out of consideration Christ's plain words that His coming again was to be "in that generation," the one then living, and have built up a theory of His coming at the supposed end of time, arguing that, since the resurrection and His coming are connected in time, therefore, the resurrection must be at the end of time. This, however, we find is not a reasonable conclusion, in view of all that is said on the subject in the Scriptures. (See a fuller discussion of the second coming in Part I of this book.)

Difference of opinion is encountered on the interpretation of I Cor. 15:42-44, "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." The important question is the Apostle's meaning of the word "sown" (Greek, *speiro*). This word does not mean "bury" but "plant" in order to reap. Had Paul meant "bury" in this verse, there is no reason why he could not have used the word "thapto" which he used in this same chapter to describe Christ's burial (v. 4). And since Paul used a word

that nowhere else is used to represent the burial of a dead body, it would be expected that other terms used in conjunction would not conform to that idea either. This is just what we find.

1. We take the word "corruption" (Greek, *phthora*). Although in modern usage "corruption" is a term commonly associated with the grave, the Greek word for corruption in this text does not connote this idea in the New Testament. In Gal. 6:8 "He that soweth unto his flesh shall of the flesh reap *corruption*," it is a moral and spiritual destruction, opposite of "eternal life." So it is in Rom. 8:21. Creation groans in expectation of deliverance "from the bondage of *corruption* unto the liberty of the glory of the children of God." Peter tells us (II Peter 1:4) of a possibility of becoming "partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the *corruption* that is in the world by lust." From this common usage it appears that by *sowing in corruption* the Apostle does not mean interment of a corpse, but rather the decaying process through which the natural body is constantly passing. Paul says this in so many words (II Cor. 4:16), "Though our outward man is decaying (Greek, *phtheiretai*, *passing through a process of corruption*), yet our inward man is renewed day by day."

2. The expression *in dishonor*, and *in weakness* are less appropriate to a dead body than *in corruption*. We never think of our beloved dead as *in dishonor*, but rather, we have them honorably embalmed, and sometimes interred in costly mausoleums. To speak of a dead body as buried *in weakness* is also unthinkable. We know of the weakness of the flesh in life, but we would never think of a corpse as weak.

3. A defunct corpse cannot properly be called a natural or *psychical body* (Greek, *soma psychikon*). Such a body must have in it a living soul. This psychical body is an outward and visible organ of the human soul, here put in contrast with the *spiritual body* (*soma pneumatikon*), the heavenly organ of

the spirit, adapted to the conditions of heavenly life. The transition from the psychical state to the spiritual state, however, is possible only on the death of the outward organism, the body.

Furthermore, the analogy of the seed (v. 36) does not fit the conception of the lifeless body being buried and then raised again, for the seed is sown in full life, and dies after it is sown; the invisible germ sprouts into new life, while the old body remains in the earth and is not made alive again at all. The particular grain that is sown is not the body that shall be. The new body that is made alive is not the dust of the old body quickened into new life, but a God-given body (v. 38). And as far as this applies to the question at hand, we are left to infer that the body of the resurrection is not resuscitated and brought up out of the dust of the old body of the flesh in a moment of time, but it is the perpetuation of the personal life that was in the body of the flesh in a new body of its own, supplied according to a divine order of things in the Kingdom of God.

We believe, therefore, that man's destiny is to be something far beyond a mere living soul. While man continues in flesh on earth, he is earthy, sown in corruption, in dishonor, in weakness, but in the resurrection (*the standing again*) the earthy is superseded by the heavenly (v. 49). We see Paul's answer to "With what manner of body do they come?" (v. 35) is, that we are to exchange the psychical and earthy body for the image of the heavenly. And we conclude, withal, that I Cor. 15:35-44 has no reference to the burial of defunct, lifeless, *non-psychical* bodies.

In I Thessalonians, the first book of the New Testament to be written, Paul speaks of Jesus' coming and bringing with Him those who sleep in Jesus, as we read, chapter 4: 13-18. These words were written to state that they who had fallen asleep really precede the living into the presence of the Lord. And this we see was to be before "We shall be caught up," the "we"

including Paul himself then living. This agrees perfectly with the words of Christ (Matt. 16:27, 28) that His coming was to be in the lifetime of some then living.

The answer to the question with what manner of body do they come, together with certain connected ideas, seems to be most clearly given by Paul in II Cor. 4:18 to 5:4, "The things that are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens for in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven."

In these words appear these truths:

1. What is seen is temporal. So then as the literal re-creation of the body from the grave is seen, therefore, temporal, such cannot be eternal, and cannot be a condition of the heavenly. Such ideas, too, would be contrary to the words of Paul in I Cor. 15:50, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God," and 15:44, "It is raised a spiritual body."

2. Two bodies are referred to, "The earthly house" and "the house from heaven." This accords with I Cor. 15:44, "there is a natural body and there is a spiritual body."

3. The dissolution of that earthly house was to occur at the time of death. The earthly tabernacle was then put off.

4. At the very time that earthly house was to be put off, that heavenly house was to be put on. It was not to be in the future or at the end of the world, the earthly house laying in the meantime in the grave awaiting "the resurrection morn."

5. This heavenly house was to be eternal. If so, it would not be visible to fleshly eyes.

6. That which was mortal was to be dissolved and superseded by that which was living.

7. When in possession of that heavenly house, the

possessor is to be at home with the Lord, and all groaning will have ceased forever.

8. There is no reason to say this "being clothed upon with our house which is from heaven" is to be in some future time, but when we die.

9. The resurrection body is a spiritual, invisible body awaiting every faithful soul to take the instant life leaves the earthly body.

Is there any statement in the above not in accord with the Scriptural truths in those verses? We have endeavored to include only that which is clearly stated.

As to the thought that those who die are clothed upon with the resurrection body at once upon death, the writer can believe nothing else in the case of a woman at whose death bed he stood. The woman said within two minutes before breathing stopped, "Mother, I see Jesus coming." With that she held out her hands, then her hands gradually folded and breathing ceased. A perfect illustration of Paul's teaching in Corinthians. A spiritual body was ready for the soul whose earthly house became no longer habitable.

Since there is no Scripture to compel one to feel such belief is wrong we wish to believe with Paul, that the resurrection body is given as we lay off this mortal.

CHAPTER VIII

EXEGESIS OF JOHN 5:28, 29; I COR. 15:26; ROM. 8:23

But some will say "What then is the meaning of the words in John 5:28, 29, 'for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation?' Does this not show that the bodies shall come forth from the grave?"

In answer let it be said that the expression, "all that are in their graves" offers no difficulty to us, because:

1. We see in the words simply a mode of expression meaning "those now dead," or from the Hebrew viewpoint, those in "Sheol." This is in perfect agreement with the thought of the times in which spoken, as all were taught that those who died went to "Sheol," the place of departed spirits. One cannot insist on a rigid literal interpretation, for the dead are not all in the graves. Certainly we can see no convincing argument here for a resurrection of the fleshly body that returns to dust.

2. Christ did not refer to *our* future, for His was an expression possible only for that age before the Coming of Jesus, as Rev. 20:11-14 teaches us that at His Coming to judgment "death and Hades (Hebrew, sheol) were cast into the lake of fire" (v. 14). So, if we believe that Christ's plain words of prophecy were fulfilled (Matt. 16:27-28), as Part I of this book attempted to prove, and that He has, therefore, come, then in our day there is no such place as "sheol," but each soul at the death of the fleshly body will be raised

a "spiritual body," taking "the house from heaven" awaiting it, as Paul assures us in II Cor. 5:1-4. And those who say that Rev. 20:11-14, and particularly v. 14, has not yet been fulfilled argues that "sheol or hades" still exists, and therefore, all who die still go thither instead of to the presence of God, if deserving that end. But this is not the evangelical teaching of today and should not be, for it is just such that has given rise to the "soul sleeping" heresy and its natural companion "second probation and purgatory."

3. The voice of the Son of God is addressed to the soul, not to the dead body. And viewed in this way it agrees perfectly with Paul in II Cor. 5:1-4, aforementioned, and with Rev. 20:4, 5 where John, referring to the first resurrection, says he saw the "souls" (not fleshly bodies) of those who lived and reigned with Christ.

And whosoever holds to the notion of the graves opening and the dead bodies being re-created make Paul and John, also the Gospel of John and Book of Revelation, by the same author, to differ and contradict one the other, as the above references would show.

But the true meaning is that when all that are in their graves, that is, all that have died previously, shall hear His voice, they shall come forth with their house not made with hands, spiritual, invisible, because eternal, some "unto resurrection of damnation, some unto the resurrection of life."

As to when this "coming forth" for all that are in the graves shall be, all we have to guide us is the plain words of Scripture in Matt. 16:27, 28, which says His coming to judgment shall be before the death of some of His disciples, and at the judgment scene, according to Matt. 25:31, "Shall be gathered all nations, and He shall separate them."

A like expression to John 5:28 is found in Revelation 20:13, "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it." This does not mean that the dead bodies which had been eaten by sea monsters, going to make up

bodies of animal or plant life, were to be re-created, but rather as John saw (Rev. 20:4, 5), the "souls," not bodies, were the subjects of the resurrection and with perfect alignment with other passages. The souls of those lost in the sea will be judged just as those who are living at the coming of Christ in judgment, "and they were judged every man according to his works."

A question is often asked in regard to I Cor. 15:26, "The last enemy that shall be *abolished* is death." Does not this mean that some time in the future there will be a cessation of death, translation of our bodies taking its place? In answer, let us say that the verb "abolished" is the same used in another passage by Paul (II Tim, 1:10), saying, "Jesus Christ who *abolished* death, and brought life and immortality to light." In this passage Paul declares that Jesus had already abolished death. Facts, therefore, show that the word "abolished" does not indicate cessation of death, for people still die. Such argument is unnecessary, however, for the Greek verb from which this verb is translated does not mean cessation of, but *made useless, of no account*. This, Jesus has accomplished for us. Death has lost its sting. Christians die triumphant in their Lord. Death is of no account. And since this is so, there is presented before one another argument for the point we tried to prove in Part I of this book, namely, That Jesus is now here in His "parousia," for the passage before us is given by Paul in connection with that Coming (parousia) of Christ (I Cor. 15:23, 24). (See our discussion of this passage on page 65.) Then all enemies were put under His feet, and the last enemy, death, was to be *made useless, of no account*. By this we see that this passage does not refer to our future as the time for its fulfillment and the original question is asked on account of a misconception as to the meaning of the verb "abolished."

In regard to Rom. 8:23, "We groan waiting for adoption, to-wit, the redemption of our body," we see

but a reiteration of the same writer's thought in I Cor. 15:44, 51, 53, of a "standing up" (Greek, *anastasis*) of the spiritual bodies, and the changing of those still living at the parousia into incorruptible, immortal, invisible bodies. And if so, then it does not refer to fleshly bodies, for all the future being brought from the grave at the end of time. Paul was here speaking in close connection (Rom. 8:18) of "the glory which shall (Greek, *mello, is about to*) be revealed," which in turn refers to the parousia of the Son of Man, when the misery, bondage and groaning for deliverance from that terrible age of persecution would have adequate response. He was not referring to our future, as we see it, for that parousia was expected in the lifetime of the Apostle himself and his fellow-believers. Part I of this book shows that such must have taken place at the end of the age, about A. D. 70.

But as to the nature of that redeemed body, the clearest statement in Scripture is found in II Cor. 5:1, heretofore quoted. We know that when our earthly house of this temporal residence is dissolved we *have*—not shall have—a building of God not made with hands, a residence of eternal elements in the heavens. And this is the comfort we are allowed to give believers that are in affliction—as soon as their eyes close on earthly scenes they will open the eyes of their spiritual bodies upon the realities and glories of the mansions of the Father's house, there to abide forever.

With these objections and queries answered by Scripture, which is the only proper way, and finding no Scripture compelling us to deviate from Paul's plain words on the subject of the resurrection, we rest our cast, hoping that new light may have been made possible on this important subject, the opposite teaching of which has retarded the action of Christians. A positive Scriptural message we have hoped to give, full of force and comfort for the righteous.

PART THREE

The Judgment

CHAPTER IX

THE SUBJECT INTRODUCED

IN connection with a consistent, biblical view of the Second Coming of Christ and the Resurrection of the Dead, there must be inseparably connected a consistent, biblical doctrine of the Judgment, for they are found inseparably connected in the Scriptures.

For a basis of thought on the judgment we take as text, II Tim. 4:1, which reads, "The Lord Jesus Christ shall (Greek, *mellontos*, *is about to*) judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom."

This is doubtless one of the sources of the expression on the subject of the judgment in the Apostles' Creed as expressive of the Apostle's teaching, "From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead." Here a judgment of the living is spoken of as well as of those who had or would have died before His coming or appearing.

Matt. 25 is the great chapter on the judgment. This is divided into three distinct parts. 1. The parable of the wise and foolish virgins whose main teaching is that a constant watch is necessary. 2. The parable of the talents whose main teaching is that of a reward for faithful service, and since there was no difference in the wording in regard to the rewards of the two faithful servants (verses 21 and 23) though one gained five talents and the other only two, we conclude that the basis of reward is not on the "results" of works and

deeds, but on the basis of faithful service as seen in those works and deeds whether we have done the best possible according to the time allotted and talents with which endowed. 3. The third part of this chapter on the judgment depicts the actual separating of the bad from the good, the goats from the sheep. And since God knows the intents and thoughts of the heart, the motives and principles of human action, there would be no more difficulty for God to make a division between good and bad than to reward the servants of the parable for faithful service or not.

Likewise, II Cor. 5:10 says, "all must appear before the judgment seat of Christ that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." "Results and influence" are not here mentioned (nor anywhere else that we can find), but whether or not there has been faithful service, and the latter term we use as the equivalent of "works" and "deeds" as used in Matt. 16:27 and Rom. 2:6, which describes the basis of our rewards.

The time of the judgment is spoken of as "In the day that ye think not," or as Acts 17:31, "God hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness." But this does not say, nor can be believe, that Paul meant that day to be the last day of time, or else it makes Paul and Jesus to disagree, for Jesus says plainly (Matt. 16:27, 28, and parallel in Mark and Luke), that His coming for judgment will be in the generation then living, and that the judgment was to be in the lifetime of some of the individuals then living (II Tim. 4:1), according to practically all Scripture in the Gospels and Epistles referring to that appearing.

CHAPTER X

EXEGESIS OF ACTS 17:31; MATT. 25:31, 32

And if one is not yet convinced that Acts 17:31 does not refer to the end of time for the beginning of the judgment, let him consider the word "will" of the verse. Take note that in the Greek it is not a simple future tense of the verb "to judge" as would seem in the English translation, but is translated from the Greek word "mello," which means something *about to take place*, or *at the point of* being done (Liddell and Scott). It is not here used to designate an occurrence in a very distant future as the future tense of any verb may. When it is used, there is a significance attached other than simple futurity.

This Greek word and its derivatives are used quite a number of times in the New Testament, some of which are the following: John 4:47, "for he was *at the point of* (mello) death;" John 7:39, "This spake He of the Spirit which they were to (mello, *were about to*) receive, for the Spirit was not yet given." The Spirit was given at Pentecost and "mello" represents a futurity between the time spoken and the Pentecost blessing. Luke, the writer of the Acts, used the word thirty-five times in that book, both before and after the passage in question, and not once is it used when "about to be" as a translation of "mello" does not suit. For example, in the chapter preceding (Acts 16:27) "He drew his sword and would (mello, *was about to*) have killed himself;" in the chapter following (Acts 18:14), "When Paul *was about to* (mello) open his mouth, Gallio," etc.

Therefore, we see that Acts 17:31 could have been translated "He hath appointed a day in the which He

is *about to* (Greek, *mello*) judge the world in righteousness." And what Paul understood as to the extent of futurity represented by his word "*mello*" as regards the time of this judgment, we can discern from the fact that Jesus used the same Greek word in his statement concerning the time of the judgment in Matt. 16:27, "For the Son of Man shall (*mello, is about to*) come, and then He shall reward every man." And then, Jesus doubtless seeing the astonished faces because of the use of "*mello*," *about to come*, took pains to express to them the futurity existing in His word "*mello*," and said (v. 28) "Verily, there are some of them that stand here who shall in no wise taste of death till' it come to pass. This is the word of Jesus himself, and Paul says he received his knowledge of the Coming "by the word of the Lord" (I Thes. 4:15). Furthermore, Paul writes Timothy and tells him (I Tim. 6:14) "Keep this commandment without spot unrebukable until the appearing of our Lord," which clearly implies that Timothy might expect to live until that event took place, and then writes him (II Tim. 4:1) "I charge thee before God and Christ Jesus, who shall (Greek, *tou mellontos, who is about to*) judge the living and the dead at His appearing."

We see, therefore, that Paul's idea of the time of the appointed day of judgment was at the Coming of Christ, which he implies would be while Timothy yet was living; and while he himself was still living, (I Thes. 4:17) "We which are alive and remain shall be caught up." Consequently he would not, and in fact did not refer to the any supposed end of time as the judgment day when talking to the Athenians.

The further idea to be made prominent is that this judgment is not the same time for all. It does not say that "all must appear before the judgment seat of Christ at the same moment of time." There is, however, no passage of Scripture that says precisely that the general judgment is to be a process. But infer-

ence is as strong as if it had been so said, since there is nothing more definite on the theory of a simultaneous judgment than this well-known Scripture (Acts 17:31), "God hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world," and we have shown just above that this passage cannot refer to the end of time.

On this last reference let it be noted that the word "day" is the same term used to designate long periods of time, as in John 8:56, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see *my day*," and John 16:23, "In that *day* ye shall ask me nothing," and many others.

"Day" as a word or expression in Acts 17:31 could, therefore, contain a meaning in extent covering the period commonly designated "the day of the Lord," reaching from the coming of Christ in judgment, about A. D. 70, until the last living soul had left time for eternity. In view of the other Scriptures on the subject, to many of which we have called attention in these pages, we believe this certainly is the necessary interpretation to be given it here.

There is absolutely no reference, as far as we can see to a far distant judgment day at the end of time in Acts 17:31. And if this Scripture is proved to refer to a judgment day in their near future while some of the contemporaries of Jesus still lived, then there is not a ray of hope left for those accustomed to believe in a general judgment at the end of time, as there are no other passages taken with their proper context which can refer to such.

It is thought by some that the judgment scene (Matt. 25:31, 32) refers to the end of time. But there is nothing in the passage to indicate that it is not connected with the foregoing context, which includes the preceding chapter, where the Coming of the Son of Man had already been predicted by our Lord (Matt. 24:30), and the time is expressly defined in verse 34, "Verily, I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled."

The description of the Coming of the Son of Man

in these verses tallies in all points with Matt. 16:27, 28, of which it is expressly affirmed that some then present would live to witness it. Comparing these two passages let us take note that:

1. In both the same subject referred to is the Coming of the Son of Man—the Parousia.

2. In both He is described as coming in *glory*.

3. In both He is attended by *the holy angels*.

4. In both He comes a king, “In His *kingdom*.” “He shall *sit on the throne*,” then shall the *King* say.”

5. In both He comes to judgment.

6. In both the judgment in some sense is universal, “reward every man,” “gathered all nations.”

7. In one (Matt. 16:28), it is expressly stated that His coming was to take place in the lifetime of some then present.

We are warranted then in regarding the Coming of the Son of Man of Matt. 25 as identical with that of Matt. 16, which some of the disciples were to live to witness.

The expression “all the nations” of Matt. 25:32 is a stumbling-block for some in that they think of it as meaning “all nations of the world,” when in all probability it means only “all the nations of Palestine.” In our Lord’s time it was usual to speak of the inhabitants of Palestine as consisting of a number of nations with their own kings. Josephus speaks of “the nation of the Samaritans,” “the nation of the Batanaeans,” “the nation of the Galileans,” using the very same Greek word (*ethnos*) which is used in the Scripture before us. Judea was a distinct nation; also, Samaria, Idumea, Galilee, Perea, Batanea, Trachonitis, Iturea and Abilene.

On this point, it would seem that the same phrase in the great commission just three chapters later (Matt. 28:19) “Go and teach all the nations” was not understood and probably was not meant that it should be so understood at that stage of development, by the disciples, as referring to the whole population of the

globe or to any nation beyond Palestine. If they did, they were certainly slow in heeding the command. It was fourteen years after the ascension before Paul left for the first time to preach the gospel to the Gentiles. Neither is there any evidence that during that period the other Apostles passed the bounds of Judea. And nothing more astonished them than the discovery as late as the time of Acts 11, (v. 8), that "then to the Gentiles also hath God granted repentance unto life." They did not seem to know it before, and when Peter was challenged for going to Cornelius of the Gentiles, an uncircumcised one, he did not vindicate his conduct by appeal to the words of the great commission. Rather, it required a distinct revelation from heaven to Peter to make the Apostles know that they were to go to other than "all nations of Palestine."

In view of the above, it is reasonable to see in "all the nations" of both Matt. 25:32 and 28:19, a restricted signification. And in this sense it harmonizes perfectly with the words of our Lord when He was instructing the Apostles, who were to go out, "Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of Man be come" (Matt. 10:23), also, with the words of our Lord in Acts 1:8, "Ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem and in Judea and Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the land," (Greek, *ge*). In regard to this last reference: The fact that Jesus in such a declaration used only names of divisions within the borders of Palestine, Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, naturally gives the Greek word "*ge*" the restricted signification, which it very often has anyway, to mean "the land" of Palestine. If it had the meaning that our English translation leads us to read into it, "earth," it would seem that countries outside of Palestine would have been mentioned, such as "Egypt, Rome, Arabia and unto the uttermost part of the earth." From words and the facts, however, we feel quite sure that the disciples understood only the "uttermost part of the land"

of Palestine, as we mentioned in the preceding paragraph in regard to "all the nations of Palestine."

We are brought to the conclusion, therefore, that we do not have in Matt. 25:31, 32, the final judgment of the whole human race, but that of the guilty nations of Palestine, who rejected their King, and whose day of judgment was near at hand.

However, there is no reason to doubt that the other statements of Jesus in this judgment section are as true today as they were in the beginning of that Great Judgment day, and which has continued from that time and will continue till the last man has finished his probation on earth.

CHAPTER XI

IS THE JUDGMENT DAY AT THE END OF TIME?

We believe, therefore, that we are in the midst of the judgment day now. Jesus Christ is the Judge and the world is being judged in righteousness, a continuous process. Each one of us is either on the right hand or the left, with the sheep or goats now. Whenever the last man dies then will be the end of the general judgment, not its beginning.

The only reason we can find that makes some believe that the judgment begins at the end of time is, as they think, that it is necessary in order to measure the extent and influence of men's deeds after their death. But this we believe to be wrong—that the influence of our deeds does not enter into our rewards, which conclusion the following illustrations would show.

The first to be mentioned is the fact that Rev. Robert Morrison, the pioneer missionary who worked 34 years, but could point to only three souls as having embraced Christianity in all that time. The influence of these three, if they were to measure the extent of Morrison's reward, certainly could not be as much as some of our missionaries today who are baptizing thousands every year. A wrong reward would be granted Morrison if results or influence of deeds counted.

What then? Just this: Morrison was faithful but with little results for a lifetime of work. Our later missionaries for example could not be more faithful to duty than Morrison but results for their 34 years, and perhaps longer, showed up by the tens of thousands. Now, according to the parable of the talents, if both

men did the best they could, the rewards would be the same. And this would be perfectly just. But results and influence would not count.

Further, it would be quite possible that a missionary today could point to 10,000 as having embraced Christianity, yet, if he were even more faithful and earnest, he might have pointed to 20,000 souls as trophies. According to the theory of influence affecting our rewards the missionary with 10,000 souls, but not doing his best, would obtain a better reward than Morrison who did his best.

Let us suppose another perfectly plausible case. Two men of the same age, both converted at the same time, both equally earnest and faithful, start to work for God, and, for the sake of argument, let us grant that both had equal talents for work, naturally, results and influence would be the same if both lived. But God saw fit to call one hence within a year; the other remained and worked for God a lifetime of 50 or 60 years. According to the theory of influence affecting rewards, the man living the longest would have a better reward. But this would be unjust toward the man who died early, who was just as faithful as the other, but had nothing to say as to whether he was to live or have time to work. These men, we believe, would receive similar rewards, which would be wholly on the basis of "faithful" service with the talents each possessed. In the case of the parable of the pounds (Luke 19:11-19), where the servant who had gained ten pounds was given authority over ten cities, the second who had gained five pounds was given authority over five cities, the Lord speaks from the standpoint of ability or capacity possessed in the light of faithful service. The parable of the talents (Matt. 25:14-23) considers the judgment from the standpoint of faithfulness alone. In the hereafter each one's vessel of enjoyment will be filled to its capacity, and in that sense each will get similar rewards on the basis of faithful service with the talents or ability each possessed.

Again, consciousness and memory being the "books opened," the influence of works after death cannot increase reward because, as we learn through psychology, there can be no consciousness and memory added after death of deeds done on earth. And no matter what advance we may make after reaching the heavenly condition, none of it will affect the reward granted for the period of probation on earth. We believe that the condition of our character at death, produced by the degree of faithfulness in life, will be the basis of our entrance and progress in the heavenly world. The one judged more faithful during life, the period of probation, will start higher and advance more rapidly than the one whose character is less developed. Therefore, do not let any one live on false hopes that the influence of a few good works might somehow multiply and at the end of time bring a better reward than if judgment were completed at death.

If one were to hold to such theory of reward for "influence," then one who may have worked and obtained a convert who turned out to be a mighty man of God would get greater reward than another who worked just as hard but obtained a convert who remained true to God but never of any marked influence in the world, a washer-woman, for example, compared with a "Billy" Sunday or some other mighty worker for God. Such greater reward would be injustice to the worker. But accept the biblical theory of rewards for faithful service only, as the parable of the talents surely teaches, and no injustice is done, and both workers will receive the same reward, if in God's knowledge, both were equally faithful.

Thus, we see there can be no reason for waiting till the end of time for the Judgment Day. It is in process now. You are either condemned or not now as you read. As you die you obtain your resurrection body as II Cor. 5:1-4 teaches, and you enter the other world. See the discussion on this passage in the chapter on the resurrection, page 95. Your reward is meted

out according to your own consciousness as to whether you have used your best endeavor for God while you lived or whether you have not.

The conception that the judgment and judgment day are to be at the end of the world or time has led to wrong conclusion and wrong living in a number of ways, two of which we shall mention. We will refer, first, to the doctrine of soul-sleeping, which would be a natural conclusion easily reached by a process of reasoning. This would lead to wrong living because, naturally, it would not be conducive to great endeavor to desire to enter heaven nor could one say with Paul, "I desire to depart and be with Christ" (Philippians 1:23). The judgment day at the end of time is not a Bible truth.

But the general view has led to further error—the "second-chance" theory and purgatory. This belief would, of course, give one a tendency not to be careful to deny self the pleasures of this world, but wait and repent then. But alas! then is eternally too late.

On the other hand, believe the plain words of Christ, that He was to come in the lifetime of some of His disciples to begin the judgment, and as the text (II Tim. 4:1) says, "of the living," and the doctrines "soul-sleeping," "second-chance theory," purgatory and the like would not even be thought of.

Peter seems to bring to us the knowledge that the judgment was only to begin at the Coming. If only a beginning then, it is inferred that there is a continuation of the process begun (I Pet. 4:17): "The time is come that judgment must *begin* at the house of God." Note in passing that this last Scripture speaks definitely that "the time is come." It was written, perhaps, in the very beginning of the war which ended in the complete overthrow of Jerusalem, and thereby agrees perfectly with the words of Jesus, heretofore quoted from Matt. 16:27, 28, that the judgment was to be, or begin at least, in the lifetime of some then living.

CHAPTER XII

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

It is true that certain passages like John 12:48, and II Pet. 3:7, 10-12, taken alone, might appear to uphold the belief that the judgment day is the last day of time; but taken with other Scriptures heretofore used in these pages, and recognizing the fact that one of these passages just mentioned is in figurative language, and the other does not say "the last day of time," it is easy to harmonize the apparent leaning to agree with plain and definite words in almost every New Testament book that the Lord was "at hand," the time of His Coming, "quickly," and the like.

In the judgment scene Christ will separate the sheep from the goats in His own way, but we cannot think of it as in the visible realm, after having our attention called to the fact that Christ coming to judgment is not in the visible, as the argument labored to prove in the former chapter on the Second Coming, and further, that the resurrection bodies of the dead are to be spiritual bodies (I Cor. 15:44) and therefore invisible, as our argument brought out in the chapter on the Resurrection of the Dead, or as (I Cor. 15:52), "In a *twinkling* of an eye * * * * * the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed," inferring a process not visible, or as the figurative passage which refers to Christ's coming "as a thief," a thief comes in the night all unseen. Therefore, we think of the judgment scene as one in the unseen world.

Much confusion and false impressions would be avoided if due attention were given to the fact that the judgment is conducted in the spiritual realm with no

spectacular manifestation, no material throne; no breath-filled trumpet; no great assembly in a locality; no sheep and goats separated by actual space; no real fire; no printed books opened (but that each man's consciousness and memory are the books). Wherever these expressions occur they are used because we must rely on similes from the material world to express the spiritual. Abstract truth is conveyed to us by concrete illustrations and representations. And if any of the above terms require the spectacular, that involves and necessitates that all the others be spectacular.

If the books that are opened at the judgment are men's own consciousness and memory (and we believe this is the fact from such Scriptures as I Cor. 4:5; Rom. 1:19; Malachi 3:16; Rev. 20:15), then the judgment is a spiritual process; and since rewards are for faithful service, and are to be for the living as well as for those who had or will have died before Christ's coming or appearing, therefore, we can easily understand that Matt. 16:27, 28 teaches that His coming to judgment was to be or commence while some of the Apostles were still living, "For the Son of Man shall (Greek, *mello*, *is about to*) come in the glory of the Father with His angels, and then He shall reward every man according to his works," which means faithful service or not. Here a judgment scene is depicted, certainly. And many stop reading at this point, but the next verse is in such close connection that it cannot be separated from the one preceding except by doing violence to the words and meaning of Christ, and reads, "Verily, there are some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming."

Connecting these two verses quoted, the conclusion appears to be that, after that coming in the lifetime of some then living, the judgment of the living spoken of in II Tim. 4:1 means those who live at and after that time. If so, it means those of us living today also.

Another thought on the subject is that "to reign"

and "to judge" are words often used interchangeably. The King is Judge, and the Judge is the King. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ" (II Cor. 5:10); "Then shall the king say unto them on His right hand," etc. (Matt. 25:34). In His one person, Christ combines the two important offices of reigning and judging; so then as long as He reigns He judges and the judgment would be a continued process as long as men lived, as Christ's reign was to be "forever and ever."

The essential thing from the evangelical standpoint to be carefully considered is, "Nothing is hid that shall not be manifested," and "Every idle word that men shall speak they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment" (Matt. 12:36). And not in the future a million years but now. John 5:24 says, "He that believes in Him that sent me * * * shall not come into judgment." John 3:18 says, "He that believeth not is judged already," and John 12:31, "*Now* is the judgment of this world." Christ as judge is now constantly approving or disapproving our conduct. But He suspends both penalty and rewards till the end of our lives, as Heb. 9:27 shows, "it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." But take note that this Scripture does not say nor even infer that the judgment for the individual was to be delayed until the end of time, nor that all will get their final pronouncement of sentence at one day or hour, but says "after death, the judgment," that is, after probation is ended for each individual. The idea of "formal pronouncement of sentence," used by the post-millennialist, is one gathered from our earthly jurisprudence rather than from the Bible.

Let the one interested take note that the "harvest" usually thought to be at the end of the world was stated by Jesus to be at the end of the *age* (Greek, *aeon*), as found in Matt. 13:39, 40 and 49. This is the same expression used by the disciples in Matt. 24:3, "When shall be the sign of Thy coming and the end

of the age" (aeon)? It is both consistent and in accord with other passages that show that the judgment was to be initiated at Christ's return, which return was to be in the lifetime of some of the disciples or at the end of the Jewish dispensation or age, which age ended about A. D. 70. And "harvest" means the harvest that was to be garnered before that notable event for which all the New Testament Christians were told eagerly to watch, the return of their Lord. There is a great stretch of time between that "end of the age" of Matt. 13:39, and the end of the world. In fact, the Scriptures nowhere speak of the world (kosmos) as ever coming to an end.

In the meantime what? The gospel is to be preached. The call to repentance is to be made. Teaching of righteousness is to progress. God doing His best to get us to do our best.

When Jesus tells us in John 12:48, "the word which I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day," there is no reason or virtue in believing Christ meant the last day of the world which it does not say, but rather, "in the last day" of him (the one who rejects), or more probably, "in the last day" of the age, immediately following which Christ himself was to come in judgment as spoken in Matt. 16:27, 28.

Many have implicitly believed the statement of the Apostles' Creed in regard to the judgment of the dead, but have passed over the idea of the judgment of the living after His appearing just as clearly taught.

We would that all might come to believe in the judgment of the living now—we either are on the right hand as sheep now or on the left hand as the goats. If on the left, repent now before it is too late.

CONCLUSION

IN conclusion we may say that as a result of our study we note the following:

1. We have failed to find any Scripture upholding the doctrine that the Lord's return is to be in our future or at the end of the world. Those who hold such theories have gotten them elsewhere than in the Bible, or have used selected passages out of their proper context and in conflict with other clear passages on the subject.

2. No longer do we need to use the Scripture statement, "Jesus is coming," for He is now here. The Old Testament prophesied of the coming Messiah. He came in His first advent, and we now look back to that great event. The New Testament prophesied of Jesus' second coming in the lifetime of some of His disciples. We believe He came as was prophesied, and now we look back to *that* great event. And this makes us in our day look back at both prophesies as having been fulfilled.

3. The great day usually called the Day of the Lord, or Lord's Day as the Book of Revelation puts it, which was to be ushered in at the Lord's return, is now here. We need not look for another such great day, except it be in the glory land, which will be the unending great day. And there is no good reason to believe that Rev. 1:10 has reference to the first day of the week.

4. If our interpretation of Paul's teaching on the resurrection in II Cor. 4:18—5:4 is correct (and as yet we have found no serious person who denies the correctness of our interpretation), we have failed to find any Scripture to uphold the idea of any general resur-

rection of the fleshly body at any future coming at the end of time. The term "general resurrection" is not biblical.

5. Jesus is now reigning, and as long as He reigns He is officially judging. Therefore the judgment day is now in process. The term "general judgment," or its idea at the end of time, is not biblical. All of Christ's words which men have taken to refer to a general judgment in our future are those regarding the guilty nation of the Jews, which judgment took place at the end of the Jewish dispensation, A. D. 70.

6. We understand that the close of the Jewish dispensation and the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple indicate the dissolution of the peculiar relation between Jehovah and the nation of Israel. The nation had rejected its Messiah and King, and the King came to judge the nation. The Messianic mission both for mercy and for judgment was fulfilled. The faithful remnant were "caught up" into the invisible realm, "ever to be with their Lord." The Kingdom of God, which was spoken of so often as being "at hand," then was made available to mankind in its fulness. The covenant nation no longer exists. There are no longer Jews and Gentiles. God is no respecter of persons. All find salvation on the same plane and for all the future. The Jews are not a chosen nation any more. In the mind of God Jew and Gentile are as one. There is no reason, therefore, to look for the Jews' return to Palestine as *God's chosen people* or that they will ever see Jesus as their Messiah. They can only see Him as "Lord of us all."

One of the greatest mistakes of the millenarians is to believe that God is preserving the Jews, a distinct nation, all these centuries to restore them finally as a Jewish nation in Palestine. The only reason the Jew remains distinctive as a race is because he holds to his old religion, just as a Hindu will remain a Hindu as long as he holds to his distinctive religion. But let either the Jew or Hindu forsake his religion and accept

the Christian religion and that soon he will begin to lose his old racial characteristics. God is not preserving them; they themselves are the guilty ones, because they have rejected Him who came to make all men one in Him. "For as many as have put on Christ, there is neither Jew nor Greek, ye are all one in Christ" (Gal. 3:27, 28). Why will so many people to bolster a theory continue to deceive themselves and mislead their followers, teaching that God is holding a premium on the Jew who still rejects His Son; furthermore, saying that God intended it so, contrary to all New Testament teaching? Who will answer?

In what we say above, there is no intention to deny the possibility and even probability that many Jews, still rejecting Jesus as the Saviour, may try to set up a Jewish State in Palestine. It will not be done in fulfillment of any prophecy, however, and such likely will be but short-lived, for Jesus must, sooner or later, be recognized, and every knee of both Jew and Gentile must bow unto Him, and every tongue confess Him as Lord of Lords, King of Kings, all and in all.

7. We have failed to find a single passage of Scripture which teaches that the affairs of this world are to end, or that even hints at the end of the race of men. The nearest approach to any such teaching is II Peter, chapter 3, but here there is sufficient evidence to show that it is the destruction of evil that is in the mind of the writer, rather than the destruction of the material universe. Therefore, since there is no revelation as to the future of this earth, it would be folly to dogmatize on the subject. All that we know is that the Kingdom of God now is in progress of building or "Coming," or as the Lord's prayer says, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done," and will continue to grow and come until "every knee shall bow." The future, not revealed further than this, is in the Father's hands.

8. In this day and age, rather than "comfort one another with these words" of a second coming future to us (of which we have found no sure Scripture ref-

erence), the Christian's joy is in the fact of Jesus now reigning and living with us, in us, among us all. When this thought dawned upon the writer as God's truth, it was a great joy indeed, perhaps next to the joy experienced by him when he definitely took his stand for Christ as his personal Saviour. And the joy still abides.

9. While both Isaiah and Micah predicted an era of universal peace to follow the Lord's return at the end of the Jewish age of New Testament times, yet we must not interpret these prophecies so as to make them nullify the words of the Lord himself, when He says of the kingdom, that it is to grow, likening it to the mustard seed, very small at the beginning but growing finally to large proportions, and to the leaven in the lump which finally leavens the whole. The prophets looked forward to the time when this kingdom had become full grown, when "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, neither shall they learn war any more." But the kingdom has not as yet reached those proportions. However, that time is in the coming for "the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." The nations are now weary of war and bloodshed, and the prophets' words were never nearer being written in actual fact than now.

10. Many do falter and despair. This appears to us to be the way by which the enemy of souls is endeavoring to retard the coming of the kingdom. When in localities the progress of righteousness is slow, or even appears for the time being to be retrogressing, such pessimistic believers say, "We are now entering the apostasy. We cannot expect anything else." And most naturally there is little incentive for such people to fight the adversary. The ground already gained gives way before this disbelief. But rather, "of the increase of God's government and peace there shall be no end." Believe this and you will work for it. Disbelieve it, and you will not work for it.

11. Both pre-millennial and post-millennial theorists must assume positions and beliefs that are not and cannot be proved by Scripture. For example, Scripture nowhere says that the Second Coming is to be in our future, or at the end of the world; Scripture nowhere says that the judgment of all living is to be on the same day or hour at the end of time; and many others that could be cited. The view presented in these pages assumes no position or idea not thoroughly in accord with Scripture. The main premises of the argument have definite Scripture references for their foundation. Otherwise, this book would not have been written.

12. The distinction between the coming of the Holy Spirit and the second coming of Christ is one of office work only as far as we have been able to see. The Holy Spirit is designated as a "Comforter or Advocate," who is to abide with us forever, whose business is, "to convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment;" to testify of the Christ, and to guide us into all truth, Christ's second coming being one of those truths. The Spirit's peculiar office work began on the day of Pentecost and is still going on. The business of the Christ in His second advent is spoken of as that of Judge and King. His peculiar office work had not yet begun when the Epistles and Revelation were written, for the Lord is spoken of in them as about to come, which agrees perfectly with the definite words of Christ, while still with His disciples, "The Son of Man shall (Greek, *mello*, *is about to*) come in the glory of His Father, and then shall He reward every man according to his works," which coming was to be in the lifetime of some of His disciples. This statement, along with other definite statements, leads one to think that the office work of Christ as Judge and King, bestowing all the privileges and blessings that such terms connote, as designated in the Scripture, began about A. D. 70, which is the burden of Part I of this book. And that peculiar office work is also still

going on and will continue to go on forever. Wherefore, our blessed experience now may be as in the words of Jesus, "If a man love me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." These two persons of the Godhead together with the Holy Spirit, now make our hearts the abiding place of the Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

13. The pre-millennial theorists must assume, among others, six very questionable and disputed arguments to maintain their claims, the failure of any one of which would seriously damage, if not completely destroy, their theory.

(a) They must assume that a double sense is in all prophecies pertaining to the Second Coming, which is, that all prophecy has two fulfillments, one near at hand and the other in the distant future. If they did not assume this they would have no argument whatever. But let one accept the "double sense" theory and he may nullify all, for who shall tell what the true sense is?

(b) They must assume that the Greek word "genea" does not mean *generation*, but only *race* or *nation* in Matt. 24:34. But that this word does mean *generation* in some places even they affirm. Therefore, no conclusive argument for pre-millennialism can be claimed in such a strained use of the word in this connection.

(c) They must assume that Matt. 16:27, 28 is fulfilled in the transfiguration scene. This, many prominent authorities deny and if these authorities are right, the pre-millennialists have no place in their theory for these important, plain words regarding our Lord's return.

(d) They must assume that the Greek word "op-tomai" and its derivatives, many times translated SEE, must, in all cases when describing the Lord's return, mean *sight with fleshly eyes*. These they use as proof of the visibility of the Second Coming. But since this word is used many times referring to incorporeal

knowledge or spiritual sight in the Scriptures, this word must be denied use as *proof*. And if not so used, the doctrine of a visible return has very little left on which to base its claim.

(e) They must assume that the Greek word "mello" does not mean the only meaning given to it by lexicographers, namely, "about to" or "on the point of," but that it refers to a very distant future instead. This nullifies its true meaning entirely. Let its true meaning be accepted and their theory must fall.

(f) They assume that the coming of Jesus is to be "as a flash of lightning" so that every eye shall see Him, which, in turn, infers that after the flash He will not be so seen. But "parousia" means not only an event, but also a continuing presence, though neither the event nor the presence may be visible, but in the unseen world.

All the above assumptions, none of which are justified because of plain words of Scripture to the contrary, must be maintained as facts by pre-millennialists in order to hold their theory together. On the other hand, doctrine taught by the plain words of Scripture cannot be said to be assumed, for nothing is assumed when one accepts what words plainly and literally say. The only assumption required in this book, vital to our contention, is that the English word "see" as regards the Lord's return, refers to fleshly sight. We assume that it does not because other plain words distinctly designate an invisible return, which makes our assumption justifiable.

Furthermore, they who still look for Jesus to come in our future not only assume, but do positively assert, that all writers of the New Testament must have been mistaken in regard to their Lord's return, that He was coming soon, in their lifetime and of that of their first readers. Some have even gone so far as to say that the Lord himself must have been mistaken, which is consistent, as that must be maintained just as surely. But all this is certainly inconsistent with the infallibility of

our Lord and with the divine inspiration of the Apostles. And it follows, that, if the latter were in error respecting an event about which they had most ample means of information, we can repose no confidence in them on other subjects, especially those which in their nature may be obscure and mysterious. We believe, however, in the infallibility of our Lord and in the inspiration of the Apostles, and that the latter were guides worthy of our confidence on this subject as well as others. We believe it to be a fact that all Scriptures which men of modern times have taken to bolster up their theories of Christ's coming in our future, except those in regard to His invisible, continuous coming, are only those passages which, if taken in their proper connection, refer to that coming, imminent to the Apostolic writers, and if so, we have no right to refer them to our future.

14. Both the pre- and post-millennialists seem to think that the words glory, glorious, glorify, have in them a meaning which necessitates visibility, outward show and dazzling brightness, when they have reference to the Second Coming. Since there is no history of any such Second Coming, they, therefore, say that the Lord's return is not yet manifest, even though certain Scripture statements, if believed, would make one know that He has already come.

That coming, however, "in the glory of His Father," "with power and great glory" and the like, was not intended to be with visibility or outward show. Rather, it is with "praise" and "honor" which are the synonyms of "glory." We, as true Christians, glorify God. Christ is come in His glory when we in our character and life show Him up to advantage—that is to glorify Him. But all know that character and life are neither visible nor tangible.

In his book, "Jesus is Coming," page 138, W. E. Blackstone says, "Jesus coming in His kingdom and His coming in His glory are synonymous." This is biblical. Now, since a kingdom is not subject to physi-

cal vision, the coming in *glory*, therefore, is not visible to fleshly eyes. The same is true regarding the other biblical expressions, "gloriously," "with power and great glory," "with brightness," when they are used in reference to His coming. Take note that "with brightness" of II Thess. 2:8 is translated "*with manifestation*" of His presence, in the Revised Version. This shows that it does not necessarily carry with it any idea of visibility as would seem to be the case of the King James Version. Christ's kingdom being in men's lives, He Himself is in "glory" and in "praise" through them. Christ receives glory in our overcoming the dragon through His power. And we need not deny the trustworthiness of the Bible statements regarding the Second Advent in the lifetime of some of His disciples, because of making words mean what they do not mean.

We would like to have answered, What advantage can one hope to gain in wishing to declare that Christ is to come visibly?

When the pre- and post-millennialists have come to realize the true meaning of the word glory, they will then have made much progress toward a consistent, biblical view of the Parousia of our Lord in His invisible presence.

15. The truth demands that changes be made in the phraseology of some church rituals, articles of faith, collects, creeds and hymns, where reference is made to eschatological subjects. They were written by men who had wrong conceptions of these subjects, and now they should be made to conform to the consistent, biblical doctrine. Some of the most important changes necessary are the following:

(a) The wording of the service of the Lord's Supper. No longer should ministers keep before the minds of the people at each communion season the words of Paul, "Ye do show the Lord's death *till He come*," for this evidently was a purely local item, meant only for the Apostolic Corinthian church from

the time written until about A. D. 70, when that church would be "raptured" along with other saints; and she ceased to occupy the pages of history about that time. A parallel case of a similar local item only, is found in Rev. 2:10, "Fear not the things thou art about to suffer; the devil is about to cast some of you in prison." We should read this only as referring to the church at Smyrna, as plain words indicate. So, instead of Paul's words, those of the Lord himself should be used. Jesus states no limitation in His words of institution.

Our Lord must feel that that old expression still in use is very dishonoring to Him, since He declared He was *about to be* present in His "parousia" before some of His disciples died, to reign forever. In fact, it would be a parallel case were we today to continue to read the Old Testament where it prophesies of a Messiah to come, as if He had not yet come. This the Jews still do. If Jesus' own prophecy of His Second Coming in the lifetime of His contemporaries was fulfilled, and if the expectation of the writers of the New Testament was realized, then we as Christians are in the same category as the Jews who believe that Jesus has not yet come as the Messiah, if we still read these words as if they were to be fulfilled in our future. The writers of the New Testament who lived "in that generation" told their readers to be on a constant lookout for their Lord as about to return, in expressions incompatible with divine inspiration if the "parousia" were not to take place until our day or at the end of time. And would we not be unbelievers in the Word if we say such was not fulfilled?

(b) Change should be made in the Apostles' Creed to give it the Scriptural phrase, "the resurrection of the dead," rather than "resurrection of the body," which latter was inserted in the creed about 340 A. D., and is not a biblical expression.

(c) In the burial service of some churches the expression, "looking for the general resurrection in the

last day," should be altered to read, "believing in the spiritual body," or some such expression. In fact, the departed has already entered upon his resurrection life with his "house which is from heaven," and we cannot be actually looking for something that has already taken place. The same might also be said of the expression intimating that there is to be a judgment day for the departed yet in the future. Alteration should be made to conform to true Scriptural doctrine on these subjects.

(d) Certain hymns and songs or parts thereof, which treat of the fulfilled prophecy of our Lord's return as if it were yet to be, should be eliminated. The same should be said of those references which treat of a final judgment still in the future, because they are not biblical.

(e) Finally, let us suggest a uniformity of teaching in the Sunday School lesson helps, so that true biblical teaching on these subjects may be imparted to our oncoming generations.

These changes being made, we feel that we will present to the world a more consistent, biblical view of things eschatological and this will be a more acceptable body of truth to the church in general.

We solicit honest criticism for and against the view herein given and whenever any such appears well taken (founded on Scripture, not on the opinions of men), we will endeavor to take them into consideration in the next edition.

The writer would be pleased to know if anyone has been helped by reading these pages.

COMMENDATIONS

I have read your manuscript with much care and find so much in it with which I agree—so many positions which are in accord with a sane and spiritual interpretation, that I wish to tell you with what pleasure I have followed your argument against material or physical interpretations of the words of Jesus and the Apostles. To you the key to the whole eschatology of the New Testament is the coming of the Lord concomitant with the destruction of Jerusalem. You have worked so diligently with it in mind, that I feel almost sure any attack upon these points will find you impregnable. You are certainly right in your conception that the coming of the Son of Man is the correlate of the coming of the kingdom; that that coming was to be invisible—really a coming to the hearts and lives of men; that its coming is attended with judgment upon those who do not receive it; that it came while “some of those standing here” did not taste of death. I am glad that you look upon the resurrection as a process and the judgment also. The coming of the kingdom, the resurrection as a process and the judgment as a process are going on together. What you have worked out will certainly stimulate others to read their New Testaments again, and I hope will set a check upon the prevalent materialist views. May your little book be widely helpful in showing its readers another way of interpreting the New Testament than the millennial with its pathetic literalness.

(Signed) JAMES S. RIGGS, D. D.,
Presbyterian. Professor, New Testament Language and Literature, Auburn Seminary, Auburn, N. Y.

I have just finished a careful reading of the manuscript of your book on "The Second Coming, the Resurrection and the Judgment." For a few decades thoughtful men have been breaking away from the bondage of materialistic misinterpretations of the teachings of the New Testament upon these subjects, that grew and fastened themselves upon the church during the dark ages.

The Protestant Reformation eliminated many errors of interpretation, but through the fire of that purification there slipped by an eschatology as inconsistent as it is illogical, as uncomfoting as it is unscriptural; and which comes near contradicting all the teachings of Christ about the Kingdom, bereaves humanity of the Kingdom, and suggests to the saints to wait for another Coming of Christ to bring in the Kingdom which He specifically *sent us to bring in*.

The Kingdom has lost immensely by the dominating views held either by pre- or post-millennialism, which have nothing to commend them as interpretations of the New Testament teachings upon these subjects, except their age, and folks are beginning to discover that even age does not make an error a truth.

I agree with you in the positions and conclusions of your book, and there is no doubt that it will stimulate its readers to study anew the Scriptures relating to the subjects, when they too will discover how much has been read into, and added to what Christ said upon these momentous facts, which changes the spiritual Kingdom of God intended for the righteousness and comfort of humanity, into a huge materialistic force, which would minister quite as much to the selfishness of fallen human nature as many other mental fabrications that have gripped men in various ages.

I bespeak for your book both a wide reading and an intense adverse criticism, for the church has not as yet had a chance to hear this subject except from the pre- and post-millennialists.

(Signed) J. R. WOLF, D. D.,
Minister, Mifflin Avenue M. E. Church, Wilkingsburg, Pa.

I have just finished a second reading of your most interesting book. It has been a source of unusual interest and profit to me. Your first part is simply masterly, and, as I understand, Scriptural. I rejoice with you beyond measure at your statement concerning the fact that we are reigning with Christ now; we are not to wait for some coming period for a carnal Christ to come to this earth, and then the disciples to reign with a carnal Christ on a carnal earth. I shall want to study very carefully your cogent arguments. They are timely indeed. Really, it would be an injustice to such a scholarly, and closely reasoned out work as yours to express an opinion without adequate study. I thank you for the privilege of reading the manuscript. I shall want one of the first copies from the press. I am sincerely.

(Signed) G. J. BURCHETT, D. D.,
Minister, Baptist Church, Vineland, N. J.

Your manuscript has proved of entrancing interest. Although I have no right to speak authoritatively on this subject, I must say that your argument appeals to me forcibly. Your method appears to me to be sane and wholesome and certainly to accept your position is to escape many puzzles and follies of speculation.

(Signed) CAMDEN M. COBERN, D. D.,
Methodist Episcopal. Professor, Department of English Bible
and Philosophy of Religion, Allegheny College, Meadville,
Pa.

I have read your manuscript with care, some parts of it several times. I think you have covered the question well and established your conclusions scripturally. I have little patience with millennialism of every variety. However, if the cause of truth will be advanced by discussion, I should like to see your manuscript have a wide circulation.

(Signed) (Rev.) C. F. SANDERS, Ph. D.,
Lutheran. Professor, Department of Philosophy, Pennsylvania College, Gettysburg, Pa.

Your book is extremely interesting and timely in view of the recurrence of millennial heresies occasioned by the European war. Your positions are well taken, and agree with the spiritual teachings of Scripture and also the plain teachings of history. You establish the true doctrine of the immanence of God in Jesus the Saviour, and well refute all arguments for the materialistic and carnal return of Christ, the Jewish Messiah. You will be attacked by sincere and earnest contenders for a sort of galvanized Judaism, but your grasp of the situation spells victory for your sane views of the program of Jesus. You have a most straightforward and consistent paper on the things you discuss. Publish by all means, and the sooner the better. Send me the first dozen books.

(Signed) E. M. STEPHENSON, D. D.,

Director of Baptist Bible School and Young People's Work in Pennsylvania, Camp Hill, Pa.

I have read the manuscript of your book with great delight and profit, not, however, without the element of sorrow entering into the reading. Many old and pleasant foundations were swept away with the flood of truth that poured from its pages. However, the truth given in return has delighted my heart beyond comprehension. Why have we been so ignorant about this most vital teaching? Why can this materialistic view of our Lord's return lay such a hold upon the church? You may have much adverse criticism from among the present day Bible students, but is not that the history of all great truths born into the world? Your book will speak for itself, and because your position is founded upon the impregnable rock of the Holy Scriptures it will endure although, for a time, it may be rejected. I ask that I receive the first book off the press, which I will prize as one of the most profitable additions to my library.

(Signed) (Rev.) R. L. SMITH,

Pastor, Lutheran Church, New Castle, Pa.

I have followed your treatment of the subject, *The Second Coming of Jesus*, with much interest. I am in hearty accord with the principle employed in the interpretation of the Scriptures, and with the general conclusion to which the consistent application of that principle brings you, as opposed to the conclusions, or rather confusions, of proof-text literalists.

Your book is a much-needed corrective influence against a widely disseminated error productive of fanaticism, and an error which has been and is a stumbling-block to an intelligent faith. The plan of procedure emphasizes and illustrates in a practical way a method of Bible study which bodes well for the future.

(Signed) (Rev.) D. L. SHAFFER,
Pastor, Lutheran Church, Homestead, Pa.

My father held the view that "the coming of Christ is to be understood as the coming of the kingdom in some of its many aspects"; that "the followers of Christ are not to look for a physical and visible return, but for His manifestation in the extension of His kingdom and the filling of human society with His spirit.

I am sure that my father would have been gratified at the many points of agreement between your interpretation of the scriptural passages bearing on the coming of Christ and his own convictions. I hope your little book may have a wide circulation and thus aid in the full coming of the Christ in His kingdom.

(Signed) ELSIE STRONG,
Daughter of the late Rev. Josiah Strong, D. D., Author of *Our Country; Our World; The New World-Religion*, etc.,
Duluth, Minnesota.

I have read with delight your complete, convincing and informing little book, "Jesus on His Second Coming". It expresses my views precisely, convictions I have held for fifteen years. It furnishes the only antidote for the pre-millennial craze since post-millennialism is false to the Scriptures, making the Bible unreliable by trying to get folk to look for things to occur now or thousands of years hence that were due according to Christ in the generation he lived in and while some of his apostles still lived.

You have furnished the solution of the problem and given a clear exposition of the view the Church *will ultimately take*. What heart-burnings, false hopes, bitter disappointments would be saved to millions if they could get your light now.

Your book ought to sell by the millions and be translated into various tongues, for millennialism post- and pre- is a world-wide heresy, crippling the Church everywhere and for ages past. Your book will help set us all right.

(Signed) CLARENCE TRUE WILSON, D. D.,
General Secretary, Board of Temperance of the Methodist
Episcopal Church, Washington, D. C.

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